

# GLIMPSES OF KISHTWAR HISTORY

By

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Behra Bhatta, Kishtwar

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## FOREWORD

It gives me immense pleasure to learn that Sh. D.C. Sharma "a noted historian, educationist and son of the soil", is bringing out a book titled GLIMPSES OF KISHTWAR HISTORY. History of Kishtwar finds important position in some of the books in History while some books have been written exclusively regarding the history of Kishtwar. The history of a place narrated loses its validity if most of the events or facts turn out to be either fabricated, self created or misquoted.

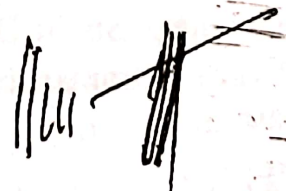
In 'Glimpses of Kishtwar History' the author has adopted a scientific approach and he has tried to draw much as a logical conclusion from the remains found all over the erstwhile Kishtwar state. In the book, an attempt has been made to reflect the life and achievements of common man who lived in this part of the country.

The sequence of events have been narrated in a logical manner. History of Paddar, Marwa, Nagseni, and Rajmandal Chatroo have been dealt with separately.

There is a separate chapter under the caption "Distortion in Kishtwar History" which is a matter of discussion. It will open new avenues for the research scholars and the historians in future.

My sincere compliments to the author for bringing out such a comprehensive and detailed account of the History of Kishtwar mostly based on remnants of past history and in a most lucid style.

Best compliments from.



(R.A. Zargar) KAS  
Addl. Deputy Commissioner,  
Kishtwar.

## PREFACE

The Glimpses of Kishtwar History will portray its culture, socio-economic condition of its people and the past historic period when it had reached the pinnacle of glory. About 40 rajas ruled over Kishtwar hill principality right from 10<sup>th</sup> C.A.D. The first historical ruler was Raja Khan Pal who hailed from Gaur Bengal, marched with a band of his followers to establish his kingdom in the hills of Himalayan belt. The last independent ruler was Raja Mohd. Teg Singh, the Muslim ruler of Kishtwar who surrendered to the Dogra Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu in 1821 A.D.

In Glimpses of Kishtwar history I have tried to bring out the past from obscurity. There are remnants of past history scattered throughout Kishtwar which became a source of inspiration for me. Many historians and writers have written about Kishtwar, but they have failed to deduce much from the remains found all over the erstwhile state. Kishtwar has found mention in Rig Ved, Mahabharat, Milind-panho and Rajataragini though the name 'Kishtwar' did not exist then. In Rig Ved, Murud Varidha – the present Marev Sudher or Marwa river and Asikini – the Chandra Bhaga river have been mentioned. Moreover, in Mahabharat the name "Lohit Mandal" has been mentioned. Lohit means saffron in Sanskrit and Mandal, an area around Kishtwar town, still known by this time. The name 'Kajangal', of Kishtwar appears in Milind Panho. This shows the antiquity of Kishtwar and its rich cultural heritage.

Brahmi letters found inscribed on the ceiling of Bathastal cave near Suid Dachhan, Sharda letters inscribed on the stone block near Sirshi Dachhan and on the stone plates of the temples at Saiya Draman in Nagseni Pargana give us an insight into the past history of Kishtwar. The inscriptions at Saiya Draman of which many have been defaced with the passage of time, if deciphered, Kishtwar will come on the stage of her pristine glory. The remains of temples at Damzi and Saiya Draman in Nagseni



Pargana will reveal the ancient glory of the area. On excavation much more of the past would come to light.

While writing Glimpses of Kishtwar History I have made an attempt to write the history which may reflect the life and achievements of common man who lived in this part of our country. History writers have not given much emphasis on the cultural history of Kishtwar. Since there are no manuscripts or any written record about its past history and the history of its rajas available not much has been written about its ancient period. No doubt the people of Kishtwar spoke a language which was akin to Pali, Sanskrit or Prakrit. Some alphabets recorded by George Grierson in Linguistic Survey of India Volume VIII part III page 3 definitely bring us to the conclusion that people of Kishtwar had a glorious past. It had its own language 'Kishtwari' and script known as Kishtwari script. The old record is not available now which might have either been destroyed by the invading forces or taken away by the interested scholars. The only book 'Milind Panho' written by Sage Nagsen in Pali language which was simpler than Sanskrit is available but some portion of the book, too, had remained untraced.

The ancient names of places in Nagseni area, Warwan and Dachhan show that sages, monks, scholars and such like cultured people lived there in seclusion with the result that some parts of Rig Ved were compiled there. An inscription in Sanskrit has been found at Zajnai in Warwan Pargana of Kishtwar which shows that the people of this area were conversant with this language. Most probably Kishtwari language, written in Kishtwari script, was actually Pali of that time and Milind Panho was written in this script. However, the original text has been lost but its translation in various languages is available now.

Histories of Kishtwar written by various authors have been found full of distortions. Why the facts of the erstwhile state have been fabricated and distorted is beyond our comprehension. One thing is, however, very clear that the writers have not deeply deliberated upon the events narrated by other historians. They

have rather been misled by the writers who seem to have been past masters in presenting concocted stories that suited to their whims and fancies. A whole chapter has been devoted to this topic in Glimpses of Kishtwar History. It will open up new avenues for the research scholars and the historians in future.

History of Paddar, Marwah, Nagseni and Raj Mandal have been dealt with separately so that these remote areas of Kishtwar having difficult and hazardous terrain may be highlighted. Since Kishtwar was parcelled out in many Rajwaras, each having its own history, the history of Kishtwar would not suffice to throw sufficient light on all such areas. As such, these areas have been given full space in the Glimpses of Kishtwar history.

The scholars, students of history and common people interested in history would find sufficient knowledge and facts about Kishtwar District – the erstwhile Kishtwar state in this book. The facts kept hidden so far will throw sufficient light on the activities of high ups in the society which ultimately led to discrimination and step motherly treatment.

Some new chapters like “Achievements of Kishtwar Development Forum”, “Dul Hasti Project” and “District and College Agitation of Kishtwar” have been included in this book so that the future generation will come to know the reality about the development of Kishtwar. The role of some social and political activists has been highlighted. This will infuse spirit of dedication, patriotism and inspiration among the youngsters and lovers of motherland.

In the end I would like to express my gratitude to all those who, in one way or the other, have supported me for bringing out this book. Thanks are also due to all my well wishers and friends for their co-operation and help.

06-03-2008

**D.C.Sharma**

Retd. Principal DIET





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## **Kishtwar — The land of Saffron and Sapphire**

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Kishtwar is a unique land of saffron and sapphire. It has lofty mountains and sloppy hills all around which bestow upon it grandeur and fascinating look for the on lookers who live in this land or visit this land. It has so beautiful landscapes and panorama that it finds a superb place in the history of our country. It has now occupied a place on the tourist map of India also. Its bewitching scenery, picturesque and charming spots have often held the foreign travellers spell bound. The waterfall of Potinag on the opposite side of Chandra Bhagha (Chenab) river is so wonderful that one becomes astonished to see its jumps from a distance. Its splendour and exquisite sight fascinate one and all. Naginshero cliff, 4090 metres above sea level, on its eastern side is just like a crown on its head. It has springs of fresh cold waters and green pastures all over the cliff. People enjoy themselves by climbing the cliff and see the country around it. Such is Kishtwar, the abode of great Seers, Saints, Sufis and Rishis.

### **Short History of Kishtwar**

The erstwhile Kishtwar state was usurped by Maharaja Gulab Singh, the Dogra ruler of Jammu, in the year 1821 A.D. and downgraded it to the status of a province under a Governor. In 1875 A.D. Maharaja Ranbir Singh further down graded it to the status of a district. Ultimately in 1909 A.D. Maharaja Partap Singh made it a tehsil of Udhampur district. Doda District, with its headquarter at Doda city, was carved out of Udhampur District



in 1948 A.D. Thus the erstwhile state of Kishtwar was brought down to the status of a tehsil of Doda district in a phased manner. Doda was then a Niabat (sub tehsil) of Ramban tehsil. Bhadarwah was then a full-fledged tehsil including the areas of present Gundoh and Thathri tehsils. The claim of Kishtwar to be the seat of district administration was ignored. People of Kishtwar, especially those hailing from far off places like Marwa, Warwan, Dachhan, Chatru and Paddar, had to face great hardships and discomfort while going to and coming from district headquarter. They had to travel long distances on foot in absence of Motorable roads. Nature, too, was averse to the prosperity of the people of Kishtwar. It has a land locked area and thus nestles in rain shadow. Monsoons hardly cross high mountains for a shower which made this area of Kishtwar drought prone area. Irrigation facilities were non-existent. Canals constructed at various places had been abandoned before completion thereby putting the state exchequer to great financial loss and with not even nominal outcome. Nobody bothered for the development of Kishtwar.

Kishtwar has played a vital role in shaping the destiny of its adjoining areas. It has bequeathed to the posterity a secular outlook hundreds of years ago. There was no other erstwhile princely state in India which had Mohd. Teg Singh, Anayatullah Singh etc, a synthesis of Hindu Muslim name, as its rulers. Kirat Singh was first Raja of Kishtwar who became a Mohammedan in about 1664 A.D. at the hands of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in Srinagar with the title of Saadatyar Khan but he preferred to be called Kirat Singh instead of Muslim name of Khan. Mohd. Teg Singh was the last ruler who had three sons namely Jai Mal Singh, Dilwar Singh and Zorawar Singh. All the Muslim rulers of Kishtwar allowed the royal priests to perform religious functions of the Rajas although they offered five time prayers according to Muslim faith also. Even Sarthal Yatra performed by the Hindu Rajas earlier was not stopped but encouraged. The tombs of Shah Farid-ud-Din and Shah Assrar-ud-Din attracted devotees from both Hindu and Muslim communities. Some of the fairs and festivals were also common. Fundamentalism and communalism had no



place in the society. Thus Kishtwar allowed a harmonious culture to flourish in its salubrious climate. This gave birth to a unified Kishtwari culture. The bonds of brotherhood were thus cemented. This is a peculiarity of Kishtwar.

### **Antiquity of Kishtwar**

In Rajatarangini its author Kalhana has mentioned the name of Kishtwar as Kashtwat but only at a few places. He seems to be quite ignorant about the happenings in his neighbourhood. This place has found mention in Rig Ved, Mahabharat, and Milind-Panho though the name Kishtwar had not emerged till then. It was called Goverdhan Sar, Mahakaligarh, Lohit Mandal, Cheerhar, Pahi and finally Kishtwar. In Rig Ved Marud Vridha, the present Marwa river called Mariev Sudher and Asikini the Chenab or Chandrabhaga river have been mentioned. Lohit Mandal was the name given to this place in Mahabharat. The name Kajangal or Kanjangal, a village in Galigad area of Kishtwar, appears in Milind Panho. There is no mention of Rig Ved, having been compiled at Rishinivas now called Rikinwas in Warwan pargana of Kishtwar. In Kalhan's Rajatarangini he has not written anything about the spread of Buddhism in Kishtwar or mentioned the name of Nagsen, the great Buddhist monk and seer, who wrote Milind panho, Such important facts have escaped the sharp eye of Kalhan is a matter of great astonishment. Kalhan wrote Rajatarangini in 1148-49 A.D. but the name Kishtwar had emerged much earlier. He has given an account of the council of eight hill rulers who attended an assembly of hill Rajas convened by king Kalas who ruled Kashmir from 1063 to 1089 A.D. Oudat Dev, Raja of Kishtwar, has been mentioned as Uttam Raja or illustrious king of Kishtwar in Rajatarangini. No other event has been recorded in the chronicle. All these events have taken the inhabitation in this land to a distant past. The old remnants strewn all over Kishtwar has brought out the past from obscurity. It has provided sufficient material to the researchers also.

The erstwhile Kishtwar state was divided into nine Parganas or cantons of Kishtwar proper, Nagseni, Paddar, Marwa, Warwan,



Dachhan, Kontwara, Saroor, Sarthal, Udil, Bawanjwah consisting of 156 revenue villages. All these have now been divided into four Tehsils of Marwa, Atholi Paddar, Chatru and Kishtwar.

### **Erstwhile Kishtwar State**

The erstwhile Kishtwar state was flourishing state. The king of Kishtwar had its own army and a fort or Qila on a hillock near Kishtwar town which was manned by a garrison of 15 to 20 soldiers. It was razed to the ground during the reign of Maharaja Partap Singh, the Dogra ruler, sometime in the year 1922 A.D. The only remains of the fort is a lonely historical throne of the Rajas of Kishtwar all made of stone measuring  $152 \times 130$  cms and 15 cms thick on the top. It stands on four carved pillars of greenish colour with 42 cms in height. Kahan Pal constructed his palace on this mound which is called Qila.

### **Geographical Features of Kishtwar**

Kishtwar is bounded on the north by Kashmir and Zaskar Valleys, on the south by Bhaderwah and Doda Tehsils, on the east by Himachal Pradesh and on the west by Anantnag and Ramban districts. It is very mountainous district which lies between  $33^{\circ}.10'$  and  $33^{\circ}.25'$  latitude and  $75^{\circ}.25'$  and  $76^{\circ}.10'$  longitude. The erstwhile Kishtwar state was one of the largest states in Divigrit, the country of two hollows, wherefrom came Dugar and from that Dogra or Dugar Desh. The other ten states were Chamba, Jammu, Chenani, Samba, Basohli, Bhadu, Mankot, Bindralta, Jasrota and Bhaderwah. Upto 1821 A.D. about 40 Rajas ruled over Kishtwar state right from the time of first historical king of Kishtwar Raja Kahan Pal in about 10<sup>th</sup> C A.D. It was once called Lohit Mandal because of saffron cultivation and its production in the present Mandal area of Kishtwar. Lohit means saffron or Kesar.

Kishtwar district branches off in three valleys of Marwa Warwan, Paddar and Chatru with their terminal at Kishtwar town. There is no other vehicular road link to these valleys except from the Kishtwar terminal. The Gateway to Dachhan is Ekhal and



Hanzal to Marwa Warwan Valley whereas Lidrari is Gateway to Paddar valley and Dadpath to Chatru Valley. Another Valley is Bawanjwah Valley which start from Dunadi some 6 Kms ahead of Thathri. Thus Kishtwar is a vast sprawling district branching out in three directions interspersed with high mountainous ranges. Mariev Sudher or Marwa river divides Marwa-Warwan-Dachan Valley with scattered population on both sides whereas Chatru Nala bisects Chingam-Chatru-Dadpath valley with population on both sides. Paddar valley parts into two valleys of Atholi - Machail Valley and Atholi - Sohal - Ishtihari valley with population on either side of Bhot Nala and Chandra Bhaga respectively. Atholi is the chief place of Paddar. It has the widest opening in the whole tract. It is on an alluvial plateau 6360 feet (1938.2 M) above sea level. Many other streams come tumbling down to Chandra Bhaga from very great heights. Warwan Valley is the most beautiful. Some of the grandest scenery is met with on the route from Marwah to Warwan upto Margan pass as the river Marwa flows through the valley. Villages are spotted on either side of the river. There is no mention of this valley in any ancient book except in Rig Ved.

### **District Status Conferred on Kishtwar**

Kishtwar approved for district status on July 6, 2006 by the state cabinet headed by Ghulam Nabi Azad, Hon'ble Chief Minister J&K State and son of the soil, started functioning from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2007 with Shahid Annayatulla, hailing from Bhaderwah, as its 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Commissioner. Conferring of district status to Kishtwar had been widely hailed and lauded by the people of Kishtwar for this great historic decision which hitherto did not find favour at the hands of valley based Chief Ministers. Kishtwar district at present has an area of 7824 Sq. Kms. excluding some forest area. It is the largest district in Jammu and Kashmir Divisions which stands at No. 3 position after Leh and Kargil Districts of Ladakh Division having 45110 sq. Kms and 14036 sq. Kms as their areas respectively. The population of the district as per 2001 census including Bawanjwah pargana was 1,92,009 which



may have gone up to 2,30,702 as per decadal growth rate of 29.04%. Kishtwar District is one half of Kashmir Division having 10 Districts and 35 Tehsils whereas it is one third of Jammu Division having 10 districts and 35 Tehsils. The nature has provided each tehsil headquarter with a peculiar position having one road link only to reach district headquarter Kishtwar.

The district headquarter Kishtwar is situated at a plain place in the midst of rocky steep mountains on the left bank of Chandra Bhaga, Commonly known in Kishtwar. The plateau is about 8 kilometres in length and 5 kilometres is breadth. It is surrounded by lofty mountains and a deep ravine through which the Chandra Bhaga rushes in all its fury. The gorge at Kishtwar is a remarkable physical feature. Kishtwar plateau is 5400 feet (1634 metres) above sea level. Adjacent to the town in a beautiful piece of land called Chowgan which measures about 520 kanals. It has fine Chinara and poplar trees around it. Deodar trees have been planted all around but are still in a developing stage. All this gives it a charming look. It is a health resort where people get solace after day's toil. Morning walkers enjoy their regular walk in this grassy meadow in cool breeze. At a distance of about 4 kilometres on north western-side of the Chowgan there is a fine health resort called Barnoie. It provides relief to the patients and peace of mind to the visitors.

River Chenab, Asikini of Vedic age or Chandra Bhaga of Kishtwaris, takes its rise from opposite side of Bara Lacha pass at a height of 5100 metres in Lahul Sipti of Himachal Pradesh. It flows through Padar, Kishtwar, Doda, Ramban, Gool Gulabgarh, Akhnoor till it enters Pakistan where it joins Jehlum and Sind rivers. From Bara Lacha to Akhnoor it traverses about 570 Kms. A mighty power potential "Dul Hasti Hydro-Electric Power Project" has been constructed over this river. It was commissioned in March, 2007. Its main tributary is Mariev Sudher or Marwa river which takes its rise from Saga glacier near Bhot Kol at a height of 4421 metres above sea level. It runs through Warwan, Marwa, Dachhan, Palmar till it joins Chandra Bhagha at Bhandarkut. Bhot Kol is also called Lanwilla pass. From Chatru



side a rivulet 'Chatru Nala' joins Marwa river at Dadpath. In Paddar Bhot Nala or rivulet from Machail side joins Chandra Bhaga at Gulabgarh Paddar. Thus Chandra Bhaga becomes a mighty river. It does not provide any irrigation facilities to the people of Kishtwar. Only timber is transported through this river.

### **Beautiful Spots in Kishtwar**

Kishtwar district has some of the beautiful spots all over which add to its glory and richness. High up mountain tops, sloppy hills and at the bottom of precipices there are some of the finest meadows, plain spots and health resorts. Near Kishtwar town on the sloppy ridge Kalam Satar is a plain spot amidst cluster of deodar trees wherein a spring of cold water gives lustre to it. At the bottom of Brahma peaks 'Brahmsar', a small lake of ice cold water and a grassy maidan of 'Satarchin' with 'Trisandhiya', a timely water course, enroute to Panjdihara Dachhan, have turned out to be the tourist spots where people go on pilgrimage once in summer months every year. Bimalnag in Saroor pargana is a health resort at the bottom of a mountain top. A Temple, all in stones, and a pond in front of it, with a spacious plain spot surrounded by deodar and conifer trees, is a picturesque spot commanding a charming view overlooking Chandra Bhaga down below. A cascade near village Ghan in Sarthal pargana is another beauty spot where people find solace and peace of mind. Water flows down the ridge very slowly. The fall is not more than 170 metres with one jump only. Likewise Devigol near Patnazi village in Bawanjwah pargana has great fascination under the cool breeze of shaddy deodar trees with fresh drinking water spring. It is situated on the top of a hill.

### **Mountain Passes**

There are a number of mountain passes on the mountain ranges which links Kishtwar district with other parts of Jammu & Kashmir State. Synthan pass links Chingam with Daksum Valley of Anantnag District at an elevation of 3784 metres whereas Margan pass links Warwan Valley with Naubugh in Kashmir at



a height of 3585 metres. Bhot Kol or Lanwilla pass, the route between Warwan and Zanakar at a height of 4421 metres. Another pass in Chatru Valley is Singpur pass called Marbal pass, 3670 metres high, which provides a route from Singpur to Gadol in Kashmir. Marwa and Brang of Kashmir valley are linked by Hukhsar pass which stands at an elevation of 4,300 metres above sea level. From Sambole side Pogal Paristan of Banihal Tehsil of Ramban District is linked by Nandmarg pass 4,110 metres above sea level. On Paddar side Umasi La or Bardhar pass links Machail of Paddar with Paddam of Zanskar at a height of 5340 metres above sea level.

### **Hot springs**

Tatta Pani in Paddar Tehsil is a famous health resort which abounds in hot springs. The main source of hot spring at Tatta Pani is a pond wherein boiling hot water gushes out. It is very hot in the pond where it is difficult for a person to touch it. There are other hot springs as well at Tatta Pani which range from very hot to luke warm water. In Marwa tehsil of Kishtwar district hot spring is located near village Renai or Anjar. It is situated at a splendid place where people go from all over for a hot bath. Another hot spring is located on the right bank of Chandra Bhaga opposite of Padyarna. These hot springs have some peculiarities. People having rheumatic pains get relief by taking bath in the hot springs for some days. People have to travel long distances by vehicles or on foot for these places.

### **Flora and Fauna**

Kishtwar is very mountainous and sparsely populated district. It is rich in forest products. The total area covered under forests is 2.44 lac hectares. The richest forests of deodar, conifer, oak, chir and pine are found on the high mountains and hills of Kishtwar. Birch is found on the highest reaches. The forests are a great source of medicinal herbs, spices and vegetables. Some of the costliest and rare herbs are found in the forests. The most valuable forest products are costus root (kuth), hemp plant (bhang), artemisia

(seski), cumin seeds (zeera), mushroom (guchhi), musk (kastori), kakarsinghe, patish, incense (dhoop), pine seed (chilgoza) e.t.c. Besides, these thick forests are infested with ferocious and wild animals such as lion, leopard, wolf, stag, deer, forest goat, jackal, monkey, musk deer, hedgehog, chamois, porcupine, ibex etc. Kishtwar played the role of a hunting ground where even foreign hunters wandered in these forests in search of beasts for their skin, meat and fur. The number of these animals has decreased enormously. However, ram chakoor, grouse, neel, ham, rangrawal and cock still abound in these forests.

### **Mineral Deposits in Kishtwar**

In Kishtwar Sapphire mines of Suncham Paddar, lead mines of chichha Nagseni, bitumen or shilajit in steep rocks of Kishtwar are famous all over the country. Sapphire is the costliest and finest quality of blue brilliant stone found in the world market. The Sapphire mines were discovered by chance in 1881 A.D. during the rule of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, the Dogra ruler of J&K state. Lead is used for preparing antimony powder and protects the eyes from many troubles if used regularly. Shilajit has great medicinal properties. It is given to patients having pain in any part of body due to fall or tumbling down the stairs. A very small quantity, about the size of a lentil seed, mixed in milk is given to the patient for quick relief.

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## The Rulers of Kishtwar

The erstwhile Kishtwar state came into existence after great struggle and consolidation of power over it. There was no central authority who could give a brave fight to the invaders. Kishtwar was ruled by local Rajas, Ranas and Thakurs in ancient times before the advent of Raja Kahan Pal of Gour Bengal on the scene.

He established his rule over Kishtwar plateau sometime in the later half of 10<sup>th</sup> C.A.D. He himself was the descendant of Pala rulers of Gour Bengal, now called Murshidabad in Bangladesh, who had been brought to Ujjain by Pratihara king of Avanti after inflicting a crushing defeat on the Palas.

### **First Historical King of Kishtwar**

It was from Ujjain that Kahan Pal, with a band of his followers, marched towards the middle Himalayan ranges to try his luck somewhere. It was a coincidence that he was guided to attack the Panjsansis on the day of 'kakul' in the month of February (Phalguna) when, as usual, they had assembled at Hudri spring for an early bath. They were pounced upon, unaware of the conspiracy, and were put to sword, one by one, till they were completely crushed. Otherwise Panjsansis used to live always equipped with five arms. Thus Kahan Pal established his rule at Tund village where from he subdued all the adjoining Rajwaras on the Kishtwar plateau previously ruled by Ganwais and Rotors. Mandal area was ruled by some chiefs who were defeated one by one. Thus Kahan Pal became the first historical king of Kishtwar plateau.

He ruled for a long time and invaded the adjoining Rajwaras of Kontwara, Thakarie, Udil etc. and subdued them. He built his palace on the hillock now called Qila. The adjoining area was named Kahan paczie (Bhiti) after his name.

### **Kahan Pal's Successors**

Kahan Pal was succeeded by his son Gandharb Sen. His another son Madan Sen founded Matta village. Third son of Kahan Pal was Deep Sen who marched towards Dachhan and Marwa and ruled over it. His successors ruled over this principality till Zorawar Singh, the Governor of Kishtwar, conquered it in 1833-34 during his first expedition of Ladakh and annexed it to Kishtwar.

Successor of Gandarb sen was Maha Sen who was succeeded by his eldest son Chander Sen who invaded Chamba and defeated its Raja. He, however, did not establish his rule there but returned with a large booty. He was succeeded by his brother Narinder Sen and then by Ram Sen, Kam Sen, Madan Sen and Braham Sen who was a poet and Sanskrit scholar.

### **Raja Oudat Dev**

Braham Sen was succeeded by his son Oudat Dev whom Kalhana calls Uttam Raja or illustrious king of Kishtwar in Rajatarangini. In 1087-88 AD he attended the "Assembly of Eight Hill Rajas" at Srinagar convened by king Kalsa of Kashmir. The other hill rajas who attended the meeting were the rulers of Baba Pura (Babore), Lohara (West Kashmir), Champa (Chamba), Vallapura (Billawar), Rajapuri (Rajouri), Urusha (Uri), Kanda (Kangra) and Kashtvata (Kishtwar). Some were relatives of Kalsa and some his tributaries but some others including the ruler of Kishtwar were his friends.

Oudat Dev was succeeded by his son Patia Dev or Prathvi Dev and then by Kanka Dev or Ganga Dev who extended his empire by defeating the local chiefs of Cheergi, Pullar and other areas of Nagseni 'excepting Chhicha and Sazar. Then came



Gaur Dev, Singh Dev or Sagar Dev, Raghu Dev, Anand Dev, Autar Dev and Bhag Dev in succession.

### **Rule of Rai Dev**

Bhag Dev was succeeded by his son Rai Dev whose wazir Mangal Rai proceeded to Paddar and established his master's rule in Jar and Kadail area of Paddar. He proved to be a tyrant ruler. Rotars and Ganwais earlier rulers of Kishtwar, rose in revolt against the Raja who found his safety in escaping to the nearby hill now called Kongan Branu. He, however, recaptured the throne of his ancestors by adopting the same tactics as was adopted by his ancestor Kahan Pal. On the day of 'Kakul' when some people had assembled at Hudri spring for a scared bath & worship Rai Dev attacked them and defeated them. Thus the power of Rotars and Ganwais was completely crushed. Kungan Branu became 'Rai Devtun Van' or Jungle of Rai Dev.

### **Rule of Raja Agar Dev**

Rai Dev was succeeded by his son Goar Dev and then by Agar Dev who attacked the Rana of Sarthal and subdued it. He gave this pargana to his brother Sunder Rai as a jagir. It was during the reign of Agar Dev that 'Ashtadashbhuj Deviji' who had gone into oblivion at Kaligarh (Galigarh), emerged in the nearby jungle. However the image was taken to Agral village named after Agar Dev, where a stone temple was constructed in which the idol was installed.

### **Successors of Agar Dev**

The next successor to the throne was Lachhman Dev. He brought Dachhan Pargana back under his rule by defeating the local rebels. He was succeeded by his son Sangram Singh who conquered Chichha and Sazar. During his rule Sangram Bhat, a Brahman of Terror Bhata of Nagseni, a renowned astrologer and Sanskrit scholar of the time, put an end to the demon by his spiritual power who had become terror for the people passing

through the Chowgan which was then a jungle of deodar trees. Sangram Bhat was rewarded by bestowing upon him a jagir which was named Sangrambhata after his name.

### **Conquest of Siraj, Pogal and Kanthi**

Sangram Singh was succeeded by his son Jagat Singh. He deputed his brother Suraj Singh for the conquest of Siraz area which got its name as 'Suraj' after the name of Suraj Singh. Then he proceeded towards Pogal and Kanthi ruled by petty chieftains. It took him about one year before annexing these areas to his brother's empire. Raja Jagat Singh abdicated the throne in favour of his son Bhag Singh.

Bhag Singh marched against Doda and Kashtigarh and conquered them and annexed them to his empire. He founded village Bhagwa in the area. He was succeeded by his son Sangar Singh and then by Magan Singh and Dulu Singh. Devi Singh, brother of Dulu Singh, was given Shristhal (Sarthal) as Jagir whose successors are now called 'Mians' of Sarthal. Dulu Singh was succeeded by Feroz Singh and then by Narain Singh.

### **Revolt in Siraz Pargana Suppressed**

Narain Singh had to face rebellions in Siraz and Malwana. He personally proceeded against them and crushed the rebels with an iron hand. He gave Barshala village as Jagir to the Brahmans of that place. It was in Malwana that people presented golden orange called 'kim' in the local dialect, on the day of a tihar (Festival) to the king. It is called 'Kimulu' in Kishtwari. Eversince that time it has become a custom to present 'Kimulu' to the elders by family women on an auspicious day.

### **Rule of Salhan Singh**

Salhan Singh succeeded his father Narian Singh. He brought the whole of Saroor pargana under his domination by defeating the local Rana. He founded a village Salana after his name in the pargana. He also married a Koli girl who gave birth to two sons - Rai Bhan and Suraj Bhan.



### **Raja Rai Singh 1525-1550 AD**

Rai Bhan ascended the throne of his father in about 1525 A.D. with the title of Rai Singh. His rule has been recorded from 1525-1550 which is near accuracy. First of all he led an expedition against the Thakurs of Raj Mandal now called Chatru. He defeated the Thakurs and annexed this area to his empire. In the year 1547 A.D. Mirza Haider Dughlat, cousin of Mughal emperor Babar, invaded Kishtwar from the side of Singpur pass. Rai Singh deputed his Wazir Narian Padiar with a strong force against the invader. A fierce battle took place near Mughal Maidan. The enemy was defeated and crushed. Many commanders and soldiers of the Mughal army were killed and buried at a place named afterwards as Mughal Mazar (grave yard of Mughals).

### **Assassination of Bijay Singh**

Bijay or Vijay Singh succeeded his father Rai Singh and ruled over Kishtwar from 1550 to 1570 A.D. During his rule a rebellion broke out in Siraz pargana. It took the Raja about 42 days to crush all the rebels. He founded village Bijarni after his name and returned. Instead of going to Kishtwar he proceeded to Badhat in Saroor Pargana to meet his relatives. All his family members were also called from Kishtwar. The Rana of Saroor revolted against the Raja. In the meantime two brothers, Gaj and Jalal of the Pargana, entered the house stealthily at the dead of night where all the members of the Raja were sleeping. They assassinated all the family members of the Raja. His only seven year old son Bhadur Singh, the heir apparent to the throne, escaped alongwith one of the trusted servants of the Raja. He reached Kishtwar and hid himself in the house of his foster mother where he was brought up as the son of Ganwais. After two years the courtiers of the Raja learnt about Bhadur Singh's escape. He was installed on the throne in about 1570 A.D.

### **Kishtwar Invaded by Chak Rulers**

During the rule of Bhadur Singh Sultan of Kashmir Ali Shah Chak invaded Kishtwar in 1572 A.D. He despatched his armies each under the command of Abdul Khan, Ali Khan and Nauroz



Chak from Synthan side. He himself came down from the side of Marbal pass. This sudden attack could not be resisted strongly by Bhadur Singh's forces. He offered his submission and acknowledged Ali Shah as his suzerain. He also gave his foster sister Shankar Dei in marriage to Yaqual Shah Chak, grand son of Ali Shah, and agreed to pay annual tribute. Bhadur Singh, however, stopped the annual tribute after one year. This became the cause of Ali Shah Chak's second invasion of Kishtwar in 1574 A.D. This time also the Raja submitted and agreed to pay tribute. He presented the wife of one of his relations to Ali Shah who married her and gave her the title of Fateh Khatoon.

In 1582 A.D. Yusuf Shah son of Ali Shah despatched a force to chastise some Kashmiri nobles who had taken shelter in Kishtwar. This attack was beaten back. Then Yusuf Shah himself proceeded against the rebels and defeated them. In 1586 A.D. Mughal emperor Akbar's general Raja Bhagwan Dass invaded Kashmir and took Yusuf Shah as a prisoner. His son Yaqub Shah ascended the throne of Kashmir. In the same year Akbar again sent an army under Qasim Khan for the conquest of Kashmir. Yaqub Shah fled away to Kishtwar. After some time he invaded Kashmir but was defeated. In 1587 A.D. Yaqub Shah again invaded Kashmir and Qasim Khan, the Governor of Kashmir, was defeated. He resigned and was replaced by Mirza Yusuf Khan Rizvi who defeated Yaqub Shah and forced him to flee to Kishtwar. In 1589 Yaqub Shah went to Kashmir to pay his personal homage to the Mughal emperor during his visit to the valley. There he was taken prisoner and sent to Rohtas (Bihar) under the custody of Raja Man Singh where his father Yusuf Shah had already been given a mansab (rank). A small Jagir at Behira (Patna) was granted to Yaqub Shah for his maintenance. However, he died there in 1593 A.D. His wife Shanker Dei was left at Kishtwar. She did some works of social welfare in the name of her husband. A water course from Lahali to Drangwaji Kishtwar, another water course from Kaninag and Godrashnag to Zewar were constructed through her own resources for which she is still remembered.

**Mughal Attack Repulsed**

Bhadur Singh was succeeded by his son Partap Singh with the title of Bhup Singh in 1605 A.D. Mirza Ali Akbar, Mughal Governor of Kashmir, invaded Kishtwar in 1606 A.D. to chase the chak rebels who had taken refuge in Kishtwar. A fierce battle was fought near Chatru. Mughal forces were severely beaten back.

**Rule of Raja Gour Singh 1618-1629 A.D.**

Gour Singh succeeded his father. The Chak rebels of Kashmir, Aiba Chak and Gour Chak, were still at large in Kishtwar and were a great source of trouble for Kashmir rulers.

**Dilawar Khan's Invasion of Kishtwar:**

During the visit of Mughal emperor Jehangir to Kashmir, Dilawar Khan, the Governor of the Kashmir, was ordered by the emperor to invade Kishtwar and arrest its Raja. Accordingly Dilawar Khan with a force of 10,000 strong reached Bhandarkut and encamped at Brinji Bag about 1km towards Kuriya bridge because the jullah over river Chandra Bhaga had been cut off. The army had to encamp there for 4 months and ten days when Dilawar Khan's son Jalal, with the help of a zimindar, constructed a 'zampha' at the dead of night down below Bhandarkut. With about 200 Afghan soldiers Jalal Khan crossed the river safely and made a sudden attack on the Raja. A fierce battle was fought near Alka, the capital of the Raja, now called Ukala near Sarkut and defeated him. The Raja was arrested and sent as prisoner to Gawalior fort. His two sons, Jagat Singh and Bhagwan Singh fled away for safety. Nasar Ullah Arab, one of the commanders, was appointed as Administrator of Kishtwar. During his administration there was upheaval throughout Kishtwar against him. Nasar Ullah Arab was killed. The matter was reported to Iradat Khan, the new Governor of Kashmir, who further reported the matter to the Mughal emperor. He was further ordered to proceed to Kishtwar and Chastise the persons involved.



## **Second Mughal Invasion**

In 1622 A.D. Iradat Khan came down to Kishtwar with a strong force. One woman, wife of some general who had been killed, known as Mughlani Begam, accompanied the forces to avenge the murder of her husband. The Mughal army had a sudden attack on the Kishtwar forces. They were defeated and uprising quelled. Iradat Khan returned to Kashmir after allowing Mughlani Begum to rule over Kishtwar. She encamped near forest quarter Sangrambhata thereafter called Garhbagh. She started a reign of terror during her 3 month's rule. Thus she avenged the murder of her husband and returned to Kashmir.

## **Release of Raja Gour Singh**

Gour Singh was released from Gawalior fort after more than one year imprisonment. Kishtwar was bestowed on him, with a horse and a dress of honour, with the title of Raja. He agreed to pay tribute and sent his son Bhagwan Singh as a hostage to Mughal court. His eldest son Jagat Singh was declared heir apparent to the throne. Jagat Singh constructed a huge building at Bhandarkut which had turned up as the most strategic place.

## **Rule of Jagat Singh 1629-35 A.D.**

He ascended the throne of Kishtwar in 1629 A.D. Bhagwan Singh, hostage in Mughal court, attracted the notice of emperor Shah Jehan during his Deccan expedition.

## **Invasion of Bhupat Pal of Basohli**

Soon after his accession to the throne Jagat Singh led an expedition against the ruler of Bhaderwah. Finding an opportunity Bhupat Pal, Raja of Basohli, dispatched a strong force under the command of his Wazir Katak Balloria and himself appeared in Kishtwar. He entered Kishtwar and occupied it without much resistance. Jagat Singh hastily returned to Kishtwar to reoccupy the throne but was defeated and killed in the battlefield. Wazir Katak was appointed administrator of Kishtwar. Bhupat Pal



took away the holy lingam of Nilkanth Mahadev from its temple near Drangwaji and returned to Basohli. He also married the princess of Kishtwar.

On hearing the valiant death of his elder brother Jagat Singh, Bhagwan Singh approached Shah Jehan for help. The emperor ordered the Governor of Kashmir to help Bhagwan Singh for reoccupying his ancestral throne. Jewan Sen Kapoor and Khan Sen Kapoor, two brothers, were sent as Wazirs for the help of Bhagwan Singh and Title of 'Khoja' was conferred on them. In 1636 A.D. Bhagwan Singh was able to reoccupy the throne after defeating Wazir Katak in the Chowgan. Wazir was beheaded. People of Kishtwar were so happy that they played football by using his head.

#### **Rule of Bhagwan Singh 1635-50 A.D.**

Bhagwan Singh sat on the throne of Kishtwar with the title of Raja. Mughal army was sent back to Kashmir with presents and Khilats. He ordered to commemorate Katak Yatra in the Chowgan in memory of the victory over Wazir Katak. He was ordered to combine one day festival in the memory of the killing of demon by Sangram Bhat. Thus 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> days of dark fortnight of Bhadoon (August) were fixed for the festival. This festival was stopped soon after 1947. This festival was called Katak yatra which with the passage of time became Katak yatra. During his reign territory of Kishtwar was further extended. Khan Sen and Jewan Sen helped him in this endeavour. He led an expedition against the local chiefs of Kastigarh, Kanthi, Ramban, Dangbatal, Pogal, Paristan and Banihal areas and conquered them. He installed a stone post just above Banihal town called 'Kishtwar Kain' or Kishtwar stone even upto this time. All these areas were annexed to Kishtwar kingdom and it became "Greater Kishtwar".

#### **Rule of Maha Singh 1650-56 A.D.**

Maha Singh alias Maha Jahan succeeded his father Bhagwan Singh. His one brother Abhay Singh had embraced Islam in the



Mughal court with the title of Islam Yar Khan. His another brother Udhar Singh was called to the Mughal court. Hafiz Giasuddin was Vakil of the Raja in the Mughal court. Raja was summoned to the royal court, perhaps on the insistence of Abhey Singh. The Raja sent his son Jai Singh to the Mughal court with Hafiz Abdul Qasim. The emperor, there upon, pardoned the Raja and allowed Prince Jai Singh to return to Kishtwar. Hafiz Giasuddin was released from prison and allowed to perform the duties of Raja's Vakil as usual.

During Maha Singh's rule Muslims from Kashmir were allowed to settle in Kishtwar probably under an agreement with Jai Singh. Accordingly Mulla Bhadur and Mulla Hussain sons of Mulla Mahmud Kashmiri, were ordered by the emperor to go to Kishtwar. They constructed a mosque 'Masjid Khawaja Garib' in Kishtwar town. A jagir and twelve annas (75 paisa) per day in cash were granted to them for their maintenance. This was for the first time that any Mohammadan settled in Kishtwar state. There was peace and prosperity in Kishtwar during Maha Singh's rule. He was just and generous ruler. Muslims from Kashmir started coming to this place. The Raja was both a Sanskrit and Persian scholar. He was also a versatile poet in Persian. He abdicated his throne in favour of his eldest son Jai Singh.

#### **Last Hindu Raja of Kishtwar 1656-1664 A.D.**

The throne of Kishtwar was not a bed of roses. Jai Singh advised his eldest son Kirat Singh to appoint his younger brother Ram Singh as Prime Minister and his third son Sardar Singh as commander of his forces. The Muslim population was on an increase in Kishtwar town. On the advice of his courtiers he stopped the Muslim travellers to stay in the town for more than a day. The Raja had to send his brother Ram Singh to Mughal court as a hostage. His next brother Sardar Singh conceived an ill will against the Raja. He stealthily left Kishtwar via Kashmir to join his brother in Mughal court. He complained to the emperor about Jai Singh's treatment with Muslims. The Raja learnt all this through his Vakil in the Mughal court and sent his son Kirat Singh



to the court to present his father's case before the emperor. Kirat Singh agreed to change the policy and was pardoned.

During Jai Singh's rule Shah Farid-ud-Din Qadri, popularly known as Shah Sahib, came to Kishtwar. The Raja came under his influence and started a policy of reconciliation towards the Muslims in Kishtwar.

### **Kirat Singh – First Muslim Raja of Kishtwar 1664-1728 A.D.**

Jai Singh abdicated the throne in favour of his eldest son Kirat Singh in 1664 A.D. His uncle Ram Singh was appointed as his Prime Minister under orders of Mughal Court. Mughal emperor Aurangzeb visited Kashmir for the first and last time in 1664 A.D. Kirat Singh was sent there by his father Jai Singh to attend the welcome ceremony organized in honour of the emperor. He was, however, imprisoned there on the instigation of Ram Singh. On the recommendation of Hafiz Abul Qasim, son of his Vakil Giasuddin, who had settled in Kishtwar, Kirat Singh was released under an agreement made on 25<sup>th</sup> Shawal 1075 Hijri corresponding to 1664 or 1665 A.D. between the emperor and Kirat Singh. He was also converted to Islam.

### **Uprising in Kishtwar**

On hearing the news of forcible conversion of Kirat Singh to Muslim faith there was an uprising in Kishtwar against the Mughals. Many people were slain and there was loot and plunder throughout the town and Mandal area of Kishtwar. Only those people were spared who took refuge in the house of Shah Farid-ud-Din. Kirat Singh returned from Srinagar and prevailed upon the people to shun bloodshed and loot. Peace and harmony were restored. However, Jai Singh could not bear to see his converted son and left for heavenly abode in disgust.

### **Rule of Kirat Singh**

On adopting Muslim faith many of the servants of the Raja were converted with him. The Raja, however, kept his old title of Singh instead of Khan conferred on him. He also used his Hindu name and the duties of purohit (Priest) were also allowed to



continue as before. There was peace, prosperity and communal harmony in the state. In the year 1717 A.D. he sent his sister Bhup Dei alongwith his younger brother Mian Mohd Khan to Mughal court where she was taken as a consort by the Mughal emperor Farrukhsiyar (1713-19) and allowed to enter the royal harem.

Mahatma Tulsi Gir, a devotee of Lord Shiva and decendant of Goswami family of Sarkut had inclination towards achieving religious exaltation from his childhood. He played a vital role in awakening the masses against Mughal domination. He sat down in Smadhi (meditation) at Sarkut and was later on buried there. A temple has been constructed over his Smadhi.

### **Assassination of Kirat Singh**

Krishna Padiar of Kishtwar town, alongwith his supporters and followers, revolted against the Raja due to growing influence of Muslims in the court. On finding an opportunity he was assassinated in Gulab Bagh where the Raja was relaxing. Kirshna Padiar occupied the throne and ruled for some time. He was killed in the battle which took place with the help of Governor of Kashmir. Amllok Singh, son and successor of Kirat Singh, was crowned as king of Kishtwar state. He ruled Kishtwar from 1728 to 1771 A.D. He laid out a garden named Raj Bagh and constructed a big pond in its midst.

### **Successor of Amllok Singh**

Mehar Singh, the eldest surviving son, ascended the throne of Amllok Singh. His two brothers, Sujan Singh and Dalil Singh, hatched conspiracies against the Raja. They ran away to Jammu and Chamba respectively. Mehar Singh had vested all powers to his Rani Vilasmaji who could not give good administration to the country. She had no male issue and, as such, she exchanged her daughter secretly with the son of a potter born on the same day. Raja of Basohli learnt about the prevailing condition of Kishtwar. He invaded the state but Raja, instead of giving a fight, fled away to Kashmir. Kishtwar went into the hands of Basohli administration and remained under her for some time.



### **Invasion of Raja of Chamba**

Mehar Singh's brother Dalil Singh had taken refuge under Raja Rai Singh of Chamba. He instigated the Raja who led an expedition against the Basohli administration. The army of Basohli fled away on hearing the advance of Raja of Chamba. Without any resistance Kishtwar fell into the hands of Chamba forces who camped in the Chowgan for about six months. Meanwhile, Mehar Singh got the support of Durrani Governor of Kashmir who sent a strong army to reoccupy his throne. His brother Sujan Singh came from Jammu with 500 soldiers and joined his brother. The combined forces of Mehar Singh and Sujan Singh defeated Chamba forces and reoccupied the throne. Mehar Singh became the Raja. He died of a disease and Sujan Singh occupied the throne with the help of Maharaja Ranjit Dev of Jammu.

### **Fall of Banihal (Banshala)**

Sujan Singh was a just and generous ruler. He was a Persian Poet and scholar. He led an expedition against Karim Baksh, the ruler of Banihal, who had announced his independence. He was killed in the battlefield and Banihal was taken back. The Raja was, however, taken ill during his tour to Siraz and died at Kandi where he had encamped.

### **Rule of Anayatullah Singh 1782-1784 A.D.**

Anayatullah Singh, son and successor of Sujan Singh, was a prisoner in Bahu Fort Jammu who had been imprisoned by Ranjit Dev. So Prathvi Singh, the exchanged son of Vilasmaji, succeeded to the throne. He, however, was thrown into river Chenab by Ajit Singh, nephew of Mehar Singh and son of Guman Singh, from Bhandarkut bridge while he was crossing it. Ajit Singh occupied the throne. People turned against him. Ranjit Dev dispatched his general Lal Dev for restoring peace in Kishtwar. He was appointed as administrator of Kishtwar and ruled over it for about 2 years. His misrule was responsible for miserable plight of people who rose against him. Meanwhile, Maharaja Ranjit Dev died in



1782 A.D. A few brave and undaunted zamindars of Siraz and Kanthi went to Bhau fort in disguise and succeeded in bringing Anayatullah Singh out of the prison and returned to Siraz. Lal Dev was forced out of the state. Anayatullah Singh was declared Raja of Kishtwar and crowned at Siraz. Anayatullah Singh marched against Paddar and returned to Kishtwar with a large booty. In 1783 A.D. Azad Khan, the Governor of Kashmir, enquired about the health of Raja of Kishtwar. On hearing about it the Raja presented himself personally with his trusted men in the court of the Governor and tendered his submission. Molvi Hafizullah, great grand-son of Hafiz Giasuddin, the Vakil in Mughal court, was appointed Vakil in Azad Khan's court on behalf of the Raja. Nur-ud-Din one of the ministers of the Raja, hatched a conspiracy against his Raja. Through Gulab Singh son of Gurnam Singh, the cousin of the Raja, some intoxicating drugs were administered to the Raja till he came under its influence. He was taken to Sarkut pond for a stroll at night where Nuruddin killed him.

### **Gulab Singh Becomes Raja**

Gulab Singh usurped the throne of Kishtwar under the prevailing situation. The chief conspirator Nuruddin was appointed as a minister. However, people rose against him in revolt and killed the conspirators, one by one, including Gulab Singh and Nuruddin. Teg Singh, the infant son of Anayatullah Singh, was seated on the throne of Kishtwar.

### **Last Independent Ruler of Kishtwar 1784-1821 A.D.**

The infant Raja Mohd Teg Singh sat on the throne of Kishtwar at the age of two with the title of Saifullah Khan.

### **Regency of Anwar Dei 1784-96 A.D.**

Anwar Dei, sister of Anayatullah Singh and widow of Yusuf Khan, became his regent. She ruled Kishtwar on behalf of Teg Singh for about 12 years. Nand Ram, a Kashmiri Pandit, who had risen to the post of Bakhshi or pay master of the forces, was a man of capability and organizing capacity. He helped Anwar Dei



in giving good administration to the people of Kishtwar. Thakurs of Kishtwar were not happy with him. They propagated against Nand Ram and the Regency. They approached Governor of Kashmir for help who sent an army under the command of his general Khudadoost. Before his reaching Kishtwar Nand Ram alongwith Anwar Dei, Teg Singh and his family fled away secretly to Bhaderwah at the dead of night. Anwar Singh and Rattan Singh, son of Gulab Singh, who had occupied the throne of Kishtwar for 40 days only, occupied the throne without any difficulty. The force of Khudadoost was rewarded and sent back to Kashmir.

### **One Year Rule of Anwar Singh and Rattan Singh**

Anwar Singh and Rattan Singh ruled over the Kingdom for one year. They divided the state into two : Siraz, Kanthi, Pogal, Banihal, Ramban and Dang Battal were given to Anwar Singh with headquarter at Doda and the rest of Kishtwar state, the present Kishtwar district, was retained by Rattan Singh with headquarter at Kishtwar. People were not happy with them and turned against them.

### **Nand Ram's Diplomacy**

Nand Ram, with the help of Bhaderwah army, marched against Anwar Singh who fled away to Kishtwar. Doda was reoccupied without any resistance and bloodshed. People supported him. Both Rattan Singh and Anwar Singh were prevailed upon by a messenger to reach Mohalla for division of empire. Mirza Mirullah Beg of Udiampur (Doda) put both the brothers to sword at night as they had been served with an intoxicating syrup. Teg Singh entered Kishtwar triumphantly and sat on the throne.

### **Pathan Invasion Repulsed**

Pathan army of Kashmir invaded Kishtwar and reached Hattar Brari village. Nand Ram and Teg Singh fled towards Pogal Paristan. Youth of Jahanwar (Tawny) tribe extended their help and support to the Raja under their leader Sardar Santoo. They took the



pathan forces by surprise and forced them to flee. They were chased by the force and many of them were either killed or drowned into river Chenab. Teg Singh reoccupied the throne. With the death of Nand Ram in 1795 A.D. the rule of regency ended.

### **Rule of Mohd Teg Singh 1796-1821 AD**

Now the Raja was about 15 years of age. He sat on the gaddi and ruled the state independently. He appointed Jattu Gauria, a Brahman of Sangrambhatta, as his Prime Minister who gave good administration to the state. He also constituted a council of ministers for his help. Mohd Teg Singh dispatched a strong army under the command of Mirza Shah assisted by Wazir Lakhpat and Wazir Rattanu for the conquest of Bhaderwah. The forces of Raja Daya Pal of Bhaderwah were defeated. The town was plundered and fort set on fire. The army returned with a large booty. Wazir Lakhpat was given Bawanjwah as jagir for this victory over Bhaderwah. During the rule of Teg Singh Sardar Jalu Rai of Dang Battal revolted. An army under the command of Mirza Mirullah Beg was dispatched against him who played a trick on Jalu Rai and murdered him. Peace was restored.

### **Shah Shuja in Kishtwar 1815-16 A.D.**

Shah Shuja, the emperor of Kabul (1803-1811) was driven out of his Kingdom. During his exile he spent his time in Hariparbat prison for some time and then he took refuge under Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Panjab (1797-1839) and was forced to surrender the most precious Koh-i-nur to the Maharaja. In 1815 A.D. he fled away and reached Kishtwar where he spent about one and a half year. He was a great Persian poet and scholar. So he had fine time in the company of Teg Singh who was also a Persian poet of repute. From Kishtwar he tried to usurp the throne of Kashmir with the help of the Raja of Kishtwar and marched against its Governor but was defeated and compelled to retreat to Kishtwar. Ultimately he secretly marched through Marwa Warwan and reached Ludhiana to meet his family in September 1816 A.D.



Teg Singh ruled his state for about 37 years including regency period. He ruled his country very well but his behaviour changed towards the end of his rule. A conspiracy was hatched by some of his councillors against his Prime Minister Wazir Lakhpat. They influenced the Raja who engaged a Pathan for murdering him. However, Lakhpat was saved but injured. He ran away to Bhaderwah where he got Sarolbag as a jagir from the Raja of Chamba. From there he went to Jammu and joined the service of Raja Gulab Singh. There he became one of his trusted men.

### **Kishtwar under Dogra Rule**

Gulab Singh, Dogra Raja of Jammu, personally led an expedition for the conquest of Kishtwar. He crossed river Chenab near Khalani by a Kharoli (Jullah bridge) and entered Doda, the winter capital of Kishtwar Raja. On hearing about it Mohd Teg Singh proceeded to Doda and tendered his submission. He met Gulab Singh but did not agree to keep his kingdom and pay annual tribute. He was, thereupon, sent as a prisoner to Lahore where he committed suicide by cutting his veins. Thus Gulab Singh conquered Kishtwar without shedding a drop of blood. Chain Singh was appointed as administrator followed by Mehta Basti Ram and then Zorawar Singh Kalhoria was appointed as Governor of Kishtwar in 1823 A.D.

### **Annexation of Marwa in 1834 A.D.**

Marwa was annexed to Kishtwar by Zorawar Singh during his first expedition of Ladakh in 1834 A.D. Till then it was ruled by the successors of Raja Deep Sen, son of Raja Kahan Pal the first historical king of Kishtwar. Mukhta Malik, commonly known as Mukhta Raja was then chief of Marwa wardwan.

### **Annexation of Paddar 1836 A.D.**

Paddar pargana was ruled by Ranas from the earliest times. Raja of Kishtwar had conquered paddar upto Atholi only. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century Chatter Singh, the Raja of champa (Chamba), had conquered it and the local Ranas were made Kardars. During



Zorowar Singh's 2<sup>nd</sup> expedition to Ladakh in May, 1836 he personally invaded Chattargarh and defeated the forces of Rattanu Palsar (Chief of Padder) who ran away to Chamba and subsequently joined the service of Raja of Jammu.

#### **Fourth Invasion of Ladakh 1839 A.D.**

Zorawar Singh led the fourth invasion on Ladakh through Paddar in May, 1839. Colonel Basti Ram was rewarded for defeating Baltis in February, 1940 near Wanko pass. Rasul Beg, Bhagwan Singh Kashtwaria and Mian Autar Singh Kashtwaria, the commanders of Dogra forces, showed their valour. In May 1841 Zorawar Singh marched into west Tibet. Mian Autar Singh was killed at Kardam. About 500 force under the command of colonel Basti Ram, Ladakhis and Baltis under general Ghulam Khan entered Tibet alongwith Zorawar Singh at Tashigong. Colonel Basti Ram was besieged at Taklakot. Zorawar Singh, however, was killed on Dec. 12, 1841 by a Tibetan soldier in the battle of Do-Yo. Thus perished the gallant General who had served his master, Raja Gulab Singh, faithfully and devotedly.

#### **Uprising in Siraz Pargana 1845 A.D.**

Bikram, the Zamindar of Kastigarh, revolted against the rule of Raja Gulag Singh in 1845 A.D. for his treatment of the subjects of Siraz Pargana. A fierce battle was fought. Bikram could not give a befitting reply to the forces of the Raja whose forces used cannons also. Bikram fled away to Srinagar and could not be traced thereafter.

#### **Rule of Maharaja Ranbir Singh 1856-1885 A.D.**

Gulab Singh ruled over Kishtwar from 1821 to 1856 A.D. He was succeeded by his son Ranbir Singh who ruled the state of J&K from 1856 to 1885 A.D. His rule was peaceful. He made some reforms in administration and Police Department. Kishtwar was first made a tehsil of Udhampur district in 1872 A.D. but in 1877 A.D. Udhampur was split into two-Udhampur and Kishtwar districts because Udhampur had become unwieldy



Wazarat. A district court was set up at Kishtwar in 1875 A.D. In 1881 A.D. sapphire mines were discovered at Suncham in Paddar Pargana.

#### **Rule of Partap Singh 1885-1925 A.D.**

Partap Singh succeeded his father Ranbir Singh in 1885 A.D. During his rule Ram Dhan was appointed settlement officer whose settlement report was published in 1914 A.D. Kishtwar had been reduced to the status of a tehsil of Udhampur district in 1909 A.D. As per this report Kishtwar Tehsil had 156 revenue villages. It consisted of 12 parganas of Bawanjwah, Saroor, Sarthal, Mandal, Nagseni, Dachhan, Paddar, Marwa, Warwan, Udil, Thakarie and Kuntwara. In 1891 A.D. forced labour system was abolished but it continued in one way or the other. First Madrasa, a Govt. primary school, was opened at Kishtwar in 1900 A.D. which was raised to the status of Middle School and then High School in 1922 A.D.

#### **Rule of Maharaja Hari Singh 1925-1948 A.D.**

Maharaja Hari Singh was the last ruler of the state who sat on the throne of his uncle Maharaja Partap Singh. He also made some reforms in his administration. Ban was imposed on child marriage. Co-operative banking system was introduced. Taqavi loans were allowed to be granted to poor farmers. In 1932 all the temples were thrown open for Harijans and other low caste Hindus. The Thakur community was treated at par with the Rajput community. Forced labour was abolished and suppressed with iron hand. He also introduced state subject concept. In 1934 A.D. Praja Sabha was set up with 75 members out of whom 33 members were to be elected and 42 members were to be nominated. Jagat Ram Aryan of Matta village of Kishtwar was nominated for the Sabha. The construction of Ashtadashbuja Devi at Sarthal was completed in 1937 A.D. It was, however, handed over to Sanatani Hindus of Kishtwar in 1948. However, the control was transferred to Dr. Karan Singh, as sole Trustee in 1962 A.D. by Sanatan Dharm Sabha Kishtwar.

### **India Wins Freedom**

On August 15, 1947 India won freedom after shedding the foreign yoke. This was the greatest achievement for all those freedom fighters whose 190 years of struggle bore fruit. However, Maharaja Hari Singh delayed accession to any dominion—India or Pakistan. Maharaja signed the instrument of accession on Oct. 26, 1947 and J&K State became an integral part of Indian Union. He was forced to abdicate the throne in favour of his son Yauraj Karan Singh and he became the Maharaja of the state.

### **Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah 1948-53 AD**

Sheikh Mohd Abdullah assumed power as head of the administration in Oct. 1947. On 5<sup>th</sup> March, 1948 he was sworn in as Prime Minister of J&K State alongwith his council of Ministers. There was communal unrest in the state, particularly in some Parganas of Kishtwar, especially in Bawanjwah and Paddar Parganas. In Mislai village of Bawanjwah Pargana 37 persons, all Hindus, were massacred by the communal forces. In 1948 A.D. district Doda was carved out of Udhampur District with Kishtwar, Ramban and Bhaderwah as its tehsils. Doda was a Niabat (Sub-tehsil) then. Still Doda city was made the headquarter of the district. Peace was restored by Militia whose arrival in the first quarter of 1948 A.D. proved a blessing in disguise.

In July 1948 A.D. Field Marshal KM. Cariappa, the then Commander-in-Chief of Indian forces, visited Kishtwar. He augmented the water supply from Godrashnag to Kishtwar town by laying additional pipe line. Thus drinking water problem was resolved for some time to the satisfaction of the people of Kishtwar.

In 1950 A.D. an act, known as "Big landed Abolition Act 1950" was enacted by which ceiling on land was fixed at 182 kanals excluding uncultivable land, orchards, gardens and residential places. Ghulam Rasul Kriapak of Kishtwar town was elected unopposed as Member Constituent Assembly in 1951 A.D. The work on construction of Naigad-Kishtwar Water supply scheme



was started in 1951 A.D. In 1953 A.D. Sheikh Mohd Abdullah personally visited the canal site. A portion of 6 Kms from the head near Bhattan village of Nagseni pargana had been constructed out of total 27 kms length at that time. However, the work was abandoned by his successor Bakshi Ghulam Mohamed. Sheikh Abdullah was dismissed on August 9, 1953 by Sadar-i-Risayat Dr. Karan Singh. He was arrested and kept under detention at Udhampur for about 22 years.

### **Bakshi Ghulam Mohd. 1953-1963 AD**

Bakshi Ghulam Mohd was appointed Prime Minister of the state in 1953 A.D. on the dismissal of Shiekh Mohd Abdullah. During his rule Kishtwar was linked with Pul Doda by a motorable road in 1958 A.D. Mehta Om of Kishtwar town, the great grandson of Mehta Mangal, who had rendered Yeoman's service as Governor of Ladakh, was elected M.L.C. in 1957 A.D. and Syed Mir Badshah was elected MLA for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time. High school Kishtwar was raised to the status of Multilateral Higher Secondary School in 1958 A.D. Adarsh Balniketan a community school, was established in 1960 A.D. Many young educated unemployed youth were given employment in Govt. sector. National conference, the ruling party, was split into two— National Conference and Democratic National Conference and Mir Badshah joined the latter. Bakshi resigned under Kamraj plan in Oct. 1963 A.D.

### **Five Month's, Prime Ministership of Shamasuddin**

Shamassuddin succeeded Bakshi Ghulam Mohd as Prime Minister of J&K State. During his rule the tomb of Shah Assar-ud-Din was mysteriously gutted on Dec. 27, 1963 A.D. It sent shock waves throughout the then Doda District.

### **Ghulam Mohd Sadiq 1964-71 A.D.**

He was sworn in as Prime Minister on 29<sup>th</sup> Feb., 1964 A.D. but he preferred to be called as Chief Minister. The designations of Prime Minister and Sadar-i-Riyasat were changed into Chief



Minister and Governor. Ghulam Mustafa Ishrat, popularly known as Ishrat Kashmiri, was elected as M.L.A on congress ticket. Om Mehta was elected Member Parliament (M.P) in Rajya Sabha in 1964 A.D. Seva Ram parihar, an advocate of Kishtwar town, was elected M.L.C. after his joining congress party in 1968 A.D.

### **Degree College Agitation 1969 A.D.**

The students of Local schools of Kishtwar town and Mandal pargana around it demanded for the opening of a degree college at Kishtwar but the same was turned down by Chief Minister G.M Sadiq during his visit to Kishtwar. On 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 1965 A.D. a bus bound for Jammu from Kishtwar met with an accident at Raghinala thereby killing 31 persons on spot.

### **Syed Mir Qasim 1972-75**

Mir Qasim succeeded as C.M. in December, 1971. In the Legislative Assembly Elections of 1972 Pir Nizamuddin was elected as MLA on congress ticket. Dr. K.L. Rao, Union Minister for Irrigation and Power, visited Kishtwar alongwith Mehta Om, Minister for Housing and urban Development in Oct., 1971 and announced that mighty power project, Dul Hasti Hydel Project, will be constructed over river Chandra Bhaga in Kishtwar which would generate 390 Mega Watt power. Indira Ghandi, Prime Minister of India, visited Kishtwar with Om Mehta in 1972 A.D. and approved for the construction of Dul Hasti Power Project.

An earthquake of great intensity occurred in Kishtwar on the night between 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> January, 1973. The houses were damaged and cracks appeared on the walls of many buildings.

### **College Agitation of 1974 A.D.**

An agitation was launched by the students of local schools of Kishtwar for the opening of a Degree College at Kishtwar in 1974 A.D. Local institutions remained closed for about a month. The agitation was supported by the people of Kishtwar and their leaders irrespective of party affiliations. On September 13, 1974 police resorted to indiscriminate firing on the procession taken out



from Tehsil office to Bus Stand. Four youth namely Ravinder Kumar S/o Dhani Ram Gupta of Kishtwar town, Gian Chand Bhagat son of Sulla Ram of Nagni Kishtwar, Mohd. Iqbal Zerger S/o Abdul Rashid Zerger and Abdul Kabir son of Sajja Begum both from Kishtwar town, fell victims to the bullets and some other persons were injured.

### **Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah 1975-1982**

Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah assumed power on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1975, under Indira Sheikh accord of 1975, as Chief Minister of the State. Elections to Legislative Assembly were held in March, 1977. Bashir Ahamad Kichloo of Kishtwar town was elected MLA. on National Conference ticket and Wali Mohd Bagwan of Bhagwan Mohella Kishtwar was nominated as MLC. Batote-Kishtwar Road was declared as National Highway 1B (NHIB). Teachers Training School Kishtwar was abolished and instead District Institute of Education was established on 1-1-1979 A.D.

### **Period of Calamities in Kishtwar**

During the winter of 1978-79 village Batwas in Gandhari Nala of Paddar pargana was washed away by an avalanche. 48 persons were buried alive at the place. Again, in the winter of 1978 village Lussani in Machail area of Paddar pargana got gutted mysteriously. On Dec. 28, 1980 nearly 50 shops and 20 houses were engulfed in fire in Kishtwar town. Some families were rendered destitutes. Kiyar village in Dachhan pargana was burnt to ashes mysteriously on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, 1981. 26 houses were gutted and 31 families rendered homeless and helpless. On 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 1981 a bus accident occurred at Banjwar on Kishtwar Paddar road. The bus rolled down into a nullah thereby killing 29 persons on spot.

### **Police Raj in Kishtwar**

There was resentment among the people of Kishtwar against the pathetic attitude of the Govt. This led to an agitation with the demand of raising the status of tehsil Kishtwar to district level and opening of a Degree College at Kishtwar. Kishtwar Front



was formed with G.H. Arman as its president. There was wide spread unrest and struggle for conferring district status to Kishtwar. This agitation was virtually launched on June 13, 1981. The Govt. clamped police Raj in Kishtwar. M.A. Nomani, DIG police, was appointed administrator in January, 1982 for six months. There was indiscriminate torturing of people on frivolous charges. On the complaint of people Nomani was called back and the police Raj ended. Wazir Commission with Justice Wazir Janki Nath as its chairman, was appointed on 12<sup>th</sup> Nov, 1981 for recommending the case of conferring district status to Kishtwar. It presented its report to Farooq Govt. in Dec. 1983.

#### **Dr. Farooq Abdullah 1982-84**

During this period Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, laid foundation stone of Dul Hasti Hydro-Electric project at Shalamar on April 15, 1983. Assembly elections were held in June, 1983 and G.H. Arman was elected M.L.A. from Kishtwar on congress ticket. The recommendations of Wazir Commission for carving out new districts alongwith Kishtwar were never approved nor implemented.

#### **G.M. Shah 1984-85**

Farooq Abdullah's Govt. was dismissed by Governor Jag Mohan on July 2, 1984 and Ghulam Mohd Shah was sworn in as Chief Minister. He ruled for about 20 months. During his rule scholarships were sanctioned for the students hailing from Paddar, Marwa, Warwan, Chatru and Dachhan who were studying at Kishtwar. High Schools of Paddar, Marwa, Warwan, Dachhan and Chatru were upgraded to 10+2 Higher Secondary Schools.

#### **Governor's Rule 1986**

Governor Jag Mohan imposed Governor's rule in J&K state on March 17, 1986. On May 23, 1986 he visited Kishtwar and declared for the opening of an Arts Degree College at Kishtwar. He also issued on the spot orders for filling up of Haras, Drangwaji and Wandalsar ponds.



### **Dr. Abdullah's 2<sup>nd</sup> Term 1986-1990**

Dr. Frooq Abdullah assumed the power of Chief Minister for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time on Nov. 7, 1986. Elections to State Legislative Assembly were held in March, 1987 Bashir Ahmad Kichloo was elected M.L.A on N.C. ticket. The work on Dul Hasti Project was started during this period. On Nov. 2, 1988 another bus accident occurred at Raghinala which took the lives of 65 passengers on board. In Nov., 1989 G.H.Arman was nominated as M.L.C.

### **Governor's Rule Clamped in 1990**

Jag Mohan was appointed Governor of the state for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time on Jan. 19, 1990. It was the time when militancy/terrorism had the upper hand. He was succeeded by Gresh Chander Saxena in May, 1990. During his period militancy was at its height. On October 14, 1991, a French Engineer working with D.S.B. (Dumez-Sogea-Borie-Sae) at Dul was kidnapped by militants at Banjwar. He was, however, freed on Jan.13, 1992. This gave a great set back to the tunnel boring process on Dul Hasti Project. There was loot, plunder, arson in the area which had been perpetrated by the militants during this period. On the night of 8<sup>th</sup> February, 1992 the idol of Ashtadashbhuj Devi Ji Sarthal was taken away from the temple which sent shock waves throughout the District. However, on March 7, 1992, after 28 days of hectic activities, the idol was recovered from a nearby place. Peace was restored in the area.

### **K.V. Krishna Rao as Governor 1993-1996**

He succeeded Gresh Chander Saxena at the end of March 1993. Terrorists multiplied their activities during this period. On 10<sup>th</sup> May, 1993 Satish Bhandari of Kishtwar town, a social activist, was shot down by some unidentified militants. The situation worsened and curfew had to be imposed. On May 18, 1993, police resorted to indiscriminate firing on a peaceful protest March in the Chowgan thereby killing one person and injuring nine other persons. On January 28, 1993, three employees namely Khurshid Ahamad Sirwal, Masood Ahamad Malik and Abdul Kabir Bagwan



were taken into custody by the security forces in the parade ground. They were found dead near B.S.F camp in the morning.. It was widely resented. On August 14, 1993, 16 Hindu passengers were killed by the terrorists near Hasti on Hasti-Sarthal road. There was destruction, extortions, conflagrations etc in the area. Thousands of timber scants were burnt to ashes. Year 1993 was the worst of all the years of militancy in respect of loot, plunder and arson. There was no safety. The French Consortium (D.S.B.) finally decided to pull out of the Dul Hasti Power Project which gave a great set back to it. On June 11, 1994 Subash Chander Sen of Zelna Kishtwar was assassinated in broad day light by a militant who also was killed on that very day by the security forces. The year 1994 was the year of curfews, troubles, agonies, killings etc. at the hands of terrorists. There was great set back to the developmental process. On Nov. 9, 1995 a bus accident occurred near a spring on Hasti-Sarthal road. 16 pilgrims were killed and 8 injured. The bus was bound for Sarthal with pilgrims.

### **Dr.Farooq Abdullah's 3<sup>rd</sup> Term 1996-2002**

Farooq Abdullah was elected Chief Minister for the third term on October 2, 1996 after Governor's rule. During this period a passenger bus on way from Kishtwar to Palmar rolled down into a deep gorge near Bhandarkut bridge on 21-9-1997. 25 persons were killed on spot and 12 others were injured. Lok Sabha elections were held on 15-4-1998. Chaman Lal Gupta was elected M.P from Udampur Parliamentary Constituency of which Kishtwar was a part.

On April 25, 1998 a passenger bus from Jammu to Kishtwar skidded off the road at Kuligad and rolled down the hill thereby killing at least 30 passengers. This was a great tragedy for Kishtwar. On May 9, 1998 Chaman Lal Shan Medical Assistant was shot dead by a militant in the premises of S.D.H. Kishtwar. On 17<sup>th</sup> July, 1998, 17 Hindus were massacred by the terrorists at Shanna, Hurna and Sarawan villages of Thakarie pargana. On 24<sup>th</sup> March, 1999 Tanveer Ahamed Mir was shot dead by militants near his house in Kishtwar town, near Jama Masjid Kishtwar.



On 13<sup>th</sup> October, 1999 Lok Sabha Elections were held. Atal Bihari Vajpai of B.J.P. was elected Prime Minister of India and Chaman Lal Gupta was elected M.P. from Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency.

On 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2000 five persons were gunned down by militants at Patimhal Bus Stand in Palmar Pargana.

On the night of First January, 2001 the historic Jama Masjid Kishtwar was gutted in a devastating fire.

Science classes were introduced by Farooq Abdullah during his visit to Kishtwar in 2001. He also announced for the opening of B.Ed. College in Islamia Faridia HSS Kishtwar in private sector. In March 2001 Brij Mohan Sharma of Kishtwar town was elected as M.L.C on National Conference ticket.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2001 eight persons including three women were massacred by militants at higher reaches of Cherji area of Nagseni Pargana of Kishtwar. On the same day four persons were killed by militants at Gunderna village of Tagood. On August 3, 2001 thirteen persons of Laddar and Kundal villages of Paddar Pargana were killed by militants at Sharote Dhar Dhok and four were injured.

On 4<sup>th</sup> Dec.2001 a passenger bus from Kishtwar to Patimhal met with an accident near Kurya bridge. 15 passengers died on spot and 50 others were injured. On the previous day of this accident Chingam-Jammu bus met with an accident near Kuligad on way to Thathri in which 8 passengers were killed and 13 persons injured.

### **Mufti Mohd Syeed Nov. 2002**

In October 2002 elections to state Legislative Assembly were held. Sajjad Ahamad Kichloo, son of former Minister Bashir Ahamad Kichloo, was elected as M.L.A. on N.C (National Conference) ticket. Ghulam Mohd. Saroori was elected M.L.A on congress ticket from Inderwal constituency. On November 2, 2002 Mufti Mohd. Syeed of Peoples Democratic Party (P.D.P.) was sworn in as Chief Minister of coalition Govt. with congress



and other parties for three years under an agreement. Mufti carved out three more tehsils out of Kishtwar tehsil namely Marwa, Chatru and Paddar. G.M. Saroori was appointed as Chairman Social Welfare Advisory Board.

#### **Formation of Kishtwar Development Forum Dec. 2002**

Kishtwar Development Forum (KDF) was formed in Dec. 2002 during the rule of Mufti Mohd Syeed. Sajjad Ahamad Kichloo M.L.A Kishtwar was elected as its president and D.C Sharma, author of this book, as General Secretary. The sole aim, besides other developmental works, was to overcome the drinking water crisis in Kishtwar town and Mandal pargana by augmentation of Naigad-Kishtwar Water Supply Scheme. In the first instance 20 Lakh were collected from Chaman Lal Gupta Union Minister and Rs. 25 Lakh from S.A. Kichloo MLA from their MPLAD and CDF respectively. Union Minister Rural Development sanctioned Rs. 2 crore out of Rural Development Funds for augmentation of Kishtwar-Naigad Water Supply Scheme. In February 2003 M/S J.P. Associates agreed to provide 8" dia pipes for a portion of the scheme. Sh. G.N. Azad Parliamentary Affairs Union Minister and Dr. Farooq Abdullah M.P. sanctioned Rs. 25 lakh each for the scheme out of MPLAD.

#### **Parliamentary Elections 2004**

In April 2004, parliamentary elections were held. Man Mohan Singh of Congress Party was sworn in as Prime Minister of U.P.A. Govt (United Progressive Allaince), a coalition of many political parties. Chowdhary Lal Singh, Former Minister in the Mufti Govt. was elected M.P. of Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency. On 5<sup>th</sup> October 2005, Ghulam Rasul Hamal of Bagwan Mohalla passed away of cardiac arrest. He was a social and reglious activist.

#### **Ghulam Nabi Azad Becomes C.M. Nov. 2005**

Ghulam Nabi Azad, Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Urban Development, was sworn in as Chief Minister of Coalition Govt. in J&K State as per agreement on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2005.



### **Approval For Creation of Kishtwar District 2006**

State Cabinet headed by G.N.Azad C.M. approved for the creation of 8 New Districts including Kishtwar in J&K state on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2006. The other districts were Ramban, Reasi, Samba in Jammu region and Bandipur, Kulgam, Ganderbal and Shupian in Kashmir region.

### **Completion of Naigad-Kishtwar water Supply Scheme**

The work on Naigad-Kishtwar Water Supply Scheme was completed in July, 2006 and 8" dia water began to be supplied to the people of Kishtwar town and Mandal pargana. This solved the drinking water crisis to a large extent.

### **Fire Accidents**

On 29<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2006 fire broke out in Qadarna village of Marwa. 18 houses were completely gutted and two partially damaged. On the night of 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2006 fire broke out in Ungai village of Paddar. 17 houses were gutted and 107 people were rendered homeless.

On January, 2007 a passenger bus from Kishtwar to Doda skidded off the road near Premnager and plunged into a gorge thereby killing 12 passengers on spot and injuring 50 others.

### **District Kishtwar Starts Functioning 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2007**

District Kishtwar started functioning from 1-4-2007 with Shahid Anayatullah from Bhaderwah, previously Nodal officer, as first Deputy Commissioner. Later on Riaz Ahamad Zerger of Kishtwar town was appointed as first Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue. He had earlier served as S.D.M. Kishtwar.

### **Dul Hasti Project Started Functioning 2007**

The construction work on Dul Hasti Power Project was completed in March, 2007 and by 7<sup>th</sup> April 2007 all the three units of the project were put on 'spinning'. It started generating more than 390 M.W. electricity. This is the greatest achievement in the history of Kishtwar.

### **Devasting Blaze at Margi on 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct. 2007**

On the night between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2007 fire broke out in village Margi of Warwan area. 160 houses and nearly 100 cowsheds were reduced to ashes while 107 persons sustained injuries. 1500 people were rendered homeless.

### **Devastating Fire in Village Nali Bawanjwah**

On the intervening night of 29<sup>th</sup> February / 1<sup>st</sup> March 2008, 15 structures including a mosque and a school were gutted in a devastating fire in village Nali of Bawanjwah pargana. 17 villagers sustained burn injuries.

### **Dul Hasti Project Dedicated to Nation**

On 26th April, 2008 the prestigious Dul Hasti Hydel Power project was dedicated to Nation by Dr. Man Mohan Singh Prime Minister of India. He was accompanied by Hon'ble C.M. G.N. Azad and other State and Union Minister and Governor of the State.

### **Ungai Village Gutted in Fire**

On the intervening night of April 27 and 28, 2008, 25 houses were gutted and more than 800 cattle heads perished in devastating fire at Ungai village of Paddar.

### **Tragic Accident**

On May 2, 2008 eleven labourers were killed on Kishtwar Synthan road near Kurya bridge.

### **Greatest Accident After Raghinallah of 1988**

Manpreet Video Coach from Jammu for Kishtwar met with an accident on 8th May, 2008 near Warda (Hasti) thereby killing 36 passengers and injuring four others.

*Only those individuals who have believed  
In themselves, have become great and strong.*



## Nagsen — The Sage of Kishtwar

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Sage Nagsen, the greatest Buddhist intellectual of 2<sup>nd</sup> C. B.C of ancient India belonged to Kishtwar. His father Sonutar Brahman lived in a Brahman village Kajangal by name. It has been identified as the present Kunja village situated about 17 Km from Kishtwar town in Galigad area of Trigam pargana of Kishtwar. According to Milind Panho Pali Kajangal was situated in the Middle Himalayan belt of North Western India named Jambudivipa. It extended to Jammu, Kashmir, Panjab, North Western province and even Afghanistan. Kunja village is on the foot of a hill facing to the west in this area and is exactly situated in the Middle Himalayan belt of North Western India. This village is connected with Nagseni pargana by a mountain pass called Kunjagala. With the passage of time Kajangal was degenerated into Kunja. At present Brahmans live down below Kunja village now called Galigad but about 2000 years back it is probable that the village was inhabited by Brahmans. The name Kishtwar had not emerged at that time and, as such, there were small principalities or rajwaras with separate names ruled by petty chiefs called Rajas or Ranas. Most probably Nagseni was also a small principality ruled by Sonuter Brahman with Kajangal as its capital. It is evident from a passage in Milind - Panho Pali edited by Swami Dwarka Dass Shashtri at page 7 sub-title 8 which reads, "then Sonuter Brahman after giving one thousand mudras (coins) to a renowned Brahman Acharya (teacher) sat at the fixed place in his Prasada" and said, "Oh! Brahman teach Vedas to Nagsen". And again in the concluding lines it reads, "Nagsen, after seeking the permission of his Acharya came out of his prasada". Prasada undoubtedly means



palace. So Sonuter Brahman was not an ordinary Brahman who would engage a teacher for the education of his son Nagsen and offer one thousand "mudras" to him as Guru Dakshina of his son and that too at his palace. This evidently implies that Sonuter was a king and Nagsen his apparent.

### Early life of Nagsen

Nagsen was born in the house of Sonuter Brahman between 160 and 170 B.C. At the age of seven his father engaged a Brahman Acharya for the teaching of three Vedas and other Shilpas (Shastras) to Nagsen, which he mastered within a short span of time. He was, however, not satisfied with all this and he requested his father for higher education. One day Arhat Rohan, who earlier used to visit the house of Sonuter Brahman for seven long years for alms but returned empty handed, again appeared in Kajangal village. This time on persistent request Acharya Rohan took responsibility of imparting higher education to Nagsen. The parents agreed and Nagsen accompanied Rohan to Vattaniya Ashram, the present Bhattan village in Nagseni, and from there to Vijambhvathu and then to Rakhshittal. Here he joined the Buddhist fold. In the Assembly of Buddhist scholars he accepted to lead the life of a Bhikshu, put on the robes of a Bhikshu and got himself admitted in the Buddhist way of life. Here Nagsen read all the scriptures on Buddhism within a short period. Then, at the age of twenty, he was ordered by his Acharya (Rohan) to go to Assagut, the Arhat and the Chief of Buddhist order dwelling at Vattaniya Ashram (Hermitage) for further education. Assagut, however, was convinced of his ability and sent him to Dharam Rakhshak in Ashokaram park in Patliputra (Patna in Bihar Pradesh), which was 100 yojanas away for advance studies on Buddhism. It took him two months to reach there. There he learnt all the three Pitkas (Baskets) of Buddhist canon, acquired full proficiency in them and attained Arhathood just in six months. Thereafter he travelled extensively through out Jambudivipa and propagated Buddhist doctrines. After some time he returned to Rakhshittal.



### Religious Discussion at Sakal

Gracio-Bactrian King Menander or Menderos ruled over a part of North Western India called Jambhudivipa of which Sakal or Sagal was the capital. Sakal is the modern Sialkot in Pakistan. Menander had a great quest for knowledge and opposed Buddhism and Hinduism from the core of his heart. He was an intellectual critic but non-Indian having no faith on Hindu or Buddh Dharma. Many scholars like Puran Kasp, Makhli, Gosal, Ayupal and other intellectuals tried to satisfy him in discussion but all were defeated. He used to say boastfully, "The whole of this Jambudivipa has become devoid of scholars and intellectuals. There is not a single Brahman scholar who can dare to face me. To answer my questions is a far off matter". There was none to satisfy him to quench his thirst for knowledge. He used to put puzzles to the Buddhist scholars of heretical tendency and harassed them.

Nagsen was ordained by Arhats at Rakhshittal to go to Sakal, defeat king Menander in religious discussion and save Buddhist scholars from further shame. Thus Nagsen alongwith a large number of Bikhshus reached Sagal Nagar (Sakal) and encamped 'Sankhey Parivein (Vidyalaya). Auyupal was the Chief of the Bikhshus at Sankhey Parivein where Bikhshus stayed for learning more about Buddha Dharma. On hearing Nagsen's arrival in Parivein, Menander personally went to him and requested for a discussion in his palace alongwith his followers so that his doubts about Buddhism may be removed. The request was accepted. King Manender was flanked by his five hundred Yonkas (courtiers) whereas Nagsen was accompanied by a large number of Bikhshus. Some of the Yonkas bore Greek names which had been slightly Indianised. It is not surprising to find among them a Demetrius (Devmantriya) and Antiochus (Anantakya).

In the discourse which ensued between king Menander and sage Nagsen, the sage replied all the questions put to him by the king. The king was satisfied and was convinced to say that



Nagsen was in fact an intellectual of a great repute and a renowned scholar. He accepted his defeat, bowed before the scholar, became his disciple and embraced Buddhism. All his doubts about Buddhism were removed. He studied all the Tripitikas and became king Milind of Buddhist literature. At his death his ashes were distributed among his followers who preserved them in stupas.

### **Milindo-Panho: The Pali Treatise**

The conversation that took place at Sakal between king Menander and Sage Nagsen resulted in bringing out Milindo-Panho or "Questions of King Milind". It is the greatest work of pre-Buddh Ghosh period in Pali literature. Buddh Ghosh was the greatest Buddhist commentator of 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Milind is an Indianised version of Menander or Menderos. Milindo-Panho was written in 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. soon after the conversation took place. Its author is undoubtedly Sage Nagsen, who wrote it originally in Pali language which had close affinity with Kishtwari and prakrit. Kishtwari language at present is a degenerated form of Pali or Prakrit. Most probably the script of Milindo-Panho was Kishtwari script which was in vogue in ancient times in Kishtwar. G.A. Grierson, the linguist, has discovered some alphabets of Kishtwari script which has been reproduced at the end of the chapter 'Kishtwari language'. The book under discussion is in the dialogue form between the king and the Buddhist monk. It is a Pali treatise on the fundamental principles of Buddhist philosophy and is in a semi-canonical work. Panho is a Kishtwari word which means to solve the puzzles that were put forth by the king Menander.

Besides religious doctrines discussed therein, the book also contains topographical information about many places. It is a source of historical research. First three parts of the book were translated in Chinese language under the name "Nagsen Sutra." It has also been translated in English, Sinhali, Roman, Devnagri and other languages. Sage Nagsen won abiding fame for writing Milindo-Panho. It is considered his greatest contribution to the Buddhist



### **Identification of Nagsen's Birth Place**

In Milindo-Panho Pali satvir Nagsen himself records that he was born in the family of Sonuter Brahman in a Brahman village Kajangal. There is no name of such a place, even in degenerated form, in the Middle Himalayan belt except village Kunja situated in Galigad area of Trigam pargana of Kishtwar. The name Nagseni, pargana of Kishtwar, seems to have been kept after the name of sage Nagsen. The route from Kajangal (Kunja) passes through Kunjagala to village Bhattan, the Vattaniya Ashram of Milindo-Panho. Village Bhattan and its adjoining areas have remained centre of vital religious and cultural activities of Buddhist scholars. The Buddhist Chief used to hold assemblies in this area for the propagation and learning of Buddhist philosophy for a long time.

### **Identification of Other Places Mentioned in Milindo-Panho**

There is mention of Yugandher mountain in Milindo-Panho where Assagut, probably Ashwagupt, spiritual head of Buddhists, convened an assembly of Bikhshus for discussion so that the doubts of king Menander of Sagal about Buddhist philosophy could be removed. This Yugandher is no other mountain than Jogindhar mountain in the area hardly a few kilometres away from Bhattan village.

There is a mention of Vijambhvathu and Rakhshittal in the book which can be identified as Vagamgad and Saiya Draman. At present there runs a stream on the northern side of Naginshero mountain cliff which is called Vagamgad. In the vicinity of the place wherefrom it rises it may have been named as Vijambhvathu which with the passage of time got the degenerated form of Vagamvathu and then 'Vagamgad'. Rakhshittal may have been a place down below Vijambhavathu or in the vicinity of Vijambhvathu. Saiya Draman may be the right choice of the place but it does not resemble in any way with Rakhshittal because of its location in a plain piece of land where the possibility of having an Ashram can be justified. The ruins of stone temples at Saiya Draman with inscriptions on its stone plates, in Sharda.



Kishtwari and unknown scripts, do not indicate any connection with Rakhshittal meaning guarded bottom or safe foot hill.

This belt of Negseni area give some indications of having abodes of Bikhshus and Arhats who probably would assemble there when challenged by king Menander. Naginshero is the name of the cliff on the summit of Vattaniya Asharam, Vijambhvathu and Rakhshittal. Nagin in Kishtwari means spring and shero degenerated form of shikher means cliff or mountain top. Thus Naginshero has been given this name because of many springs and streams sprouting from its slopes on all sides such a Gumainag, Rattannag, Vagamgad, Kananinag, Gudrashnag etc. On the west southern side of Naginshero is Bathshero.

There is also a reason to believe all this. An Ashok Chakra or Dharam Charka, an idol of Buddha and some artistically carved and sculptured greyish stones have been found below Damzi village near Bhattan. The Dharan Chakra is carved on a stone about 4 feet in diameter. It has 24 spokes and all of them meet at a hole in the centre of the wheel. The image of Buddha, though small in size, has been beautifully sculptured. Local people when contacted by the author of this book said that it was an idol of "Devta or God". The place also reveals the formation of a hall like structure which casts before us the shadows of events of the past. On one side of the hall was a presidential seat to which was leading a flight of stairs. Though in dilapidated condition, Ashok Chakara and the idol of Buddha are still intact. The Buddhist conference might have been convened by the spiritual heads of Buddhists and sage Nagsen. One thing is, however, clear that these two places, Bhattan and Sai Draman, have remained the centre of cultural activities.

### **Views of Other History Writers**

Sh.P.N.Kaul (Bamzai) writes in History of Kashmir at page 71, "We have it on the authority of Milindo Panho that the discussion between Buddhist saint Nagsen and Menander or Milind, the Gracio-Indian ruler of North-Western India was held at a



place only 12 yojanas from Kashmir". According to Milinda-Panho the discussion between Nagsen and Menander took place at Sakal modern Sialkot of Pakistan, which is by no means 12 yojanas or 108 miles away from Kashmir. There is hardly any place in the valley of Kashmir where such a discussion may have taken place. The valley is only 80, miles or 120 Km in length and 20 to 25 miles or 35 Km in breadth whereas Sialkot is more than 400 Km away from Srinagar. Moreover, had Nagsen actually been born in Kashmir, the event would not have escaped the sharp eye of Kalhan, the historian of repute and author of Rajatarangini written as back as in 1148-49 A.D. There is no mention of Nagsen in Rajatarangini. Bamzai's claim is thus untenable and hence unacceptable.

Prof. G.M. Hajni, in the introduction to his poetry book 'Kashur Shairi', says that Milinda-Panho had been written in Kishtwari, so he belonged to Kashmir. If Nagsen was a Kashmiri, why he had written it in Kishtwari is again a matter of great confusion. Ishrat Kashmiri, the author of Tarikh-i-Kishtwar written in Urdu, consider Nagsen as Kishtwari on the ground that he wrote Milinda-Panho in Kishtwari. Moreover, Nagseni pargana of Kishtwar finds its name after the name of sage Nagsen. Since Kishtwari language spoken by the people during that period was very close to Pali, Prakrit or Sanskrit, their estimate cannot be discarded.

Jyoteeshwar Pathik records at page 11 of his book "Cultural Heritage of Dogras" Raja Nagsen of Kishtwar, Raja Nagpal of Bhaderwah and many other rulers in recent seems to come in this analogy. Menander's quest for knowledge was satisfied by the Buddhist Monk Nagsen, who came from Kajangala of Middle Himalayan belt, extending from Udhampur to Kishtwar and this Kanjangala can be identified as an area of Kishtwar.

Sh. G.N. Ganhar writes at page 153 in his book "Jammu Shrines and Pilgrimages" It was a fact at Sialkot (then known as Sakal) the Indo - Greek king Menander or Milind was won over to the faith by the celebrated monk Nagsen in 2<sup>nd</sup>. Century B.C. What a striking resemblance the name bears to Nagseni



area of Paddar (Kishtwar) which still has some Buddhist living in it. One is tempted to think that Nagseni is derived from his name.

On the basis of all these findings it has been established that the kingdom of Nagseni was Nagseni Pargana of Kishtwar together with Galigad area of Trigam Pargana. It was the first rajawara to have embraced Buddhism. Village Bhattan and Damzi are surely 12 yojnas or 108 miles from Srinagar via Singpur pass (Marbal pass) on foot. The ancient historian of Kashmir had very little or no knowledge at all of its neighbouring areas. Some parts of Rig Ved & Atharved had been compiled at Rishiniwas, now called Rikinwas in Warwan valley of Kishtwar, but finds no mention in Rajatarangni of Kalhana. This confirms the fact that Kalhana had very little knowledge of the area of Kishtwar.

#### **A Team Visits Saiya Draman and Damzi**

A team of experts comprising M/S A.K. Khana Deputy Superintendent Archaeologist, Lalit Gupta, Dr. Vaidiya Nath Labh of Jammu University along with his wife and Ram Sevak Sharma, Jugal Kishore Bhandari and D.C. Sharma, the author of this book, from Kishtwar visited Saiya Draman and Damzi places of Nagseni Pargana of Kishtwar on 5th May, 2007 for an on the spot assessment of these historical places of archaeological sites.

At Damzi the old remnants, an idol of Buddha and an Ashok Chakra with 24 spokes with a hole in the centre, were found missing. These were perhaps destroyed by the locals as alleged by the eldest of the place. The chiselled and smoothened stone with some carvings had been piled up whereas some more remnants had come up at the site probably by excavation. However, an idol of Bhagwan Vishnu carved on a stone plate, a twenty - four petalled Lotus and some carved stones were found heaped up in the ground. The present site indicates that structures of five temples had been existing at the place. The temples may have come up after demolishing of Buddhist Viharas. The remnants of these temples were probably of 13<sup>th</sup> century architecture.



At Saiya Draman a temple, all in stone, with a headless idol of Lord Shiva holding a 'Karmandal' in the left hand and a skull in the right hand along with a sacred thread around its neck and arm and a garland of 'Rudraksh' was existing. Four more structures of temples, one by the side of the stone temple and another in front side of it, were found at the site. The blocks of stones used in these temples were quite visible. On these chiseled and smoothened stones many inscriptions in Sharda, Kishtwari and unknown scripts, most of which have faded away, have been found carved. These are mostly visible on the stone walls of the two temples, one the stone temple and the structure of another temple by its side. An inscription on a big stone boulder was also existing on one side of the 'Draman' or ground. These inscriptions have not so far been deciphered. Saiya Draman may have been the abode of Bikhshus (Rakhshittal) during the period of Nagsen. The temples may have come up the 13<sup>th</sup> century after the downfall of Buddhism in this area. Saiya Draman has a commanding view and Yugandher (Jogindhar) mountain is clearly seen at a distance on its western side. A spring nearby having a structure of stone blocks over it, may have been the source of drinking water for the dwellers at this place.

## History of Rajmandal — Chatru

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The present tehsil Chatru comprising Chingam, Singpur, Chatru, Durbeel, Kuchhal, Inderwal, Sigdi, Mulchetar, Rahalthal, Horna and Udil Gojran revenue villages was called Rajmandal in ancient times. It is situated on the south-eastern extremity of Kashmir and on the north-western extremity of Kishtwar. Marbal pass also known as Singpur pass is 3670 metres above sea level. Chatru is situated between latitude  $33^{\circ} 30'$  and longitude  $75^{\circ} 31'$ . It links Singpur with Gadol in Kashmir valley. Another pass linking Chingam with Daksum village of Kashmir is called Synthan pass which is 3784 metres above sea level. Pogal Paristan in Banihal tehsil of Ramban district is linked through Sambole village of Chatru tehsil by Nandmarg pass situated at a height of 4110 metres above sea level. Marwa valley is also linked with Chingam via Bonda but the route is all along very tough and no foot path has emerged for pedestrians. Chatru Nala which rises from Bonda mountains and joined by other Nalas coming from Khawara and Singpur side divides the valley into two with population on either side. This stream called Chatru river joins Marud Vridha or Mariev Sudher near Dadpath village which is the gateway to Chatru. The whole area from Chatru to Singpur top was once covered with dense forests infested with ferocious animals. The route to Kashmir valley passed through these forests which was not only hazardous but also unsafe. So there was no easy way to develop relations with the people of Kashmir valley.



## INHABITANTS OF CHATRU

### Khasas

Chatru is inhabited by Thakurs, Harijans Muslims & Gujjars. Some families of Brahmans also live in this Tehsil. In the earliest times a tribe 'Khasa' settled in this region along the border of Kashmir valley in a semicircular shape from Chingam to Singpur areas. Khasas later on came to be known as Thakurs. The Thakurs of those times were agriculturists but they also excelled in warfare. Kalhana, the author of *Rajatarangini*, has mentioned the name of this area as 'Khashalya' in *Rajatarangini*. He has spoken highly of Thakurs of Chandar Bhaga. Khasas were peace loving people who always extended a helping hand to the fugitives from Kashmir who infiltrated to this side as suppliants. Khasas spoke a language which was akin to Sanskrit or Kishtwari of that time.

### Gujjars

Gujjars were originally Rajputs of Gurjaradesh now called Rajasthan and Malwa where from they spread to other areas. Some of them penetrated into this valley for settlement. They also adopted agriculture as their profession and reared buffaloes and cattle. They are basically poor and uneducated people like other settlers. They had their own dress and diet which was different from other people.

### Muslims

They were mostly converted people. They adopted Kashmiri as their language but it remained a dialect of Kashmiri. They could not change their dress and diet. Both socially and culturally they are akin to other people who speak Kishtwari dialect.

### Conquest of Rajmandal or Chatru

Rajmandal was ruled by Thakurs. They maintained their independence till Raja Rai Singh of Kishtwar who ruled over the

state between 1525–1550 A.D., led an expedition against the Thakurs of Rajmandal. This area had not till then been brought under the rule of Kishtwar kings who had established their kingdom in the middle of 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. under the first historical king Raja Kahan pal. A fierce battle was fought at Rahalthal on way from Chatru village to Singpur about five kilometres in distance. Thakurs were defeated one by one and Rajmandal was annexed to Kishtwar kingdom. Thus Rai Singh became the master of Rajmandal and extended his boundaries up to Marbal and Synthan passes which connected Kishtwar with Kashmir valley. However, this victory over Rajmandal opened up new gates for Kashmir rulers who thereafter, had an easy access and direct conflict with the Rajas of Kishtwar. Fugitives of Kashmir now found an easy approach to reach the capital of Kishtwar.

### **Invasion of Mirza Haider on Kishtwar**

In the year 1547 A.D. Mirza Haider Dughlat, cousin of Mughal emperor Babur, after conquering Kashmir in Oct. 1540 for quest of conquering more territories, marched against the Raja of Kishtwar with a huge army. He deputed his four commanders viz Bandgan-i-Koka or Koka Mir, Mohamad Magrey, Mirza Mohd. and Yahya Raina or Idi Raina to command the advance guard of his forces. They reached Rajmandal in one day and encamped at a place named Mughal Maidan later on. Mirza Haider also came down personally to Rajmandal.

### **Bravery of Kishtwar Forces**

The news of the invasion of Mirza Haider was taken by surprise in Kishtwar Darbar. The Raja called his commanders and infused in them the spirit of bravery and patriotism. He dispatched a strong army under the command of his Wazir Narian Padiar. The forces reached Loidhar on the opposite side of Mughal Maidan and encamped there. One brave woman of Kuleed Kishtwar, Koki Devi by name, armed herself and marched all alone towards Mughal Maidan. She hid herself under a stone, a place just on the other side of the bridge at Sangambhati. She



showed great bravery and valour by piercing down many soldiers of the enemy on her own while they were crossing the track one by one. The path under the stone was so hazardous that only one person could cross it at a time. Koki Devi would pierce her lance into the body of the soldier who would try to cross the track to go ahead & she would throw him into the river nearby. Other soldiers would remain unaware of the fact that happened to the soldiers who had crossed earlier. In this way many soldiers were slain.

From across the river Chatru the forces under Narian Padiar attacked the remaining soldiers. There was exchange of arrows with musket shots but the Mughal army could not cross the river. Bandgan-i-Koka and Mohd. Magrey with four other generals and a huge number of soldiers were slain in the battle field. The Mughal army was thus defeated. The Raja of Kishtwar bestowed a robe of honour to the brave woman Koki Devi. Wazir Narian Padiar and other commanders of his forces were rewarded suitably. This victory enhanced the prestige of the Raja who now became a formidable force.

### **Burial place of Mughal Army**

The dead bodies of Mughal army were buried at a place named Mughal Mazar (graveyard of Mughals), which spread over 16 Kanals of land. The only remains of the graveyard are the stone posts spread all over the chunk of land above Mughal Maidan, the present market place, which reminds us about the past glory of Kishtwar and fate of the Mughals. Mirza Haider accepted the defeat at the hands of Kishtwar forces and retreated to the valley utterly shattered. However, this defeat of Mughals at the hands of Raja of Kishtwar sowed the seeds of dissension and the Raja of Kishtwar had to pay heavily for it in future.

### **Invasion of Ali Shah Chak – 1572 A.D.**

During the reign of Bahadur Singh, Raja of Kishtwar from 1570 to 1605 A.D, the Chak ruler of Kashmir Ali Shah Chak chalked out a plan for the conquest of Kishtwar which was ruled



by a teen aged Raja. Kistwar had become an eye sore for the rulers of Kashmir after the defeat of Mughal armies at Mughal Mazar. Accordingly in the year 1572 A.D. he dispatched a strong army under the command of Abdul Khan, Ali Khan and Nauroz Chak for the conquest of Kishtwar. He himself came down to Singpur in Rajmandal to asses the position himself. The attack was from the sides of Marbal (Singpur) and Synthan passes under different commanders. The attack was so sudden that the young Raja had to accept the defeat. He acknowledged Ali Shah as his suzerain and agreed to pay annual tribute. He also gave his foster sister, Shanker Dei, in marriage to his grand son Yaqub Shah. The young Raja was the sole survivor of his family which had been massacred at Badhat in Saroor pargana. As such he had neither any survived sister nor any son at such teen age, as has been opined by some history writers.

### **Second Invasion of Ali Shah – 1574 A.D.**

Bhadur Singh could not bear the insult and defeat at the hands of Ali Shah. He organized a strong army to meet any eventuality. He paid tribute to Ali Shah for one year and after that stopped the same. This infuriated the Sultan and he made preparations for another invasion on Kishtwar. Rajmandal was first to be attacked. Ali Shah despatched a strong army under his commanders Ismail Ganie and Haider Chak in 1574 A.D. The forces crossed Rajmandal without any resistance. It was a sudden attack on the forces of Bhadur Singh who fought bravely till his forces suffered a defeat. The Raja submitted before the generals and acknowledged his overlordship. He also agreed to pay annual tribute and presented the wife of one of his relations to the Sultan. Ali Shah married her and named her as Fateh Khatoon.

### **Invasion of Yusuf Shah Chak 1582 A.D.**

In 1582 A.D. Yusuf Shah Chak, son of Ali Shah, dispatched a force to Chastise some Kashmiri nobles who had taken refuge in Kishtwar. The attack was, however, beaten back. There upon the Sultan himself proceeded against the rebels and defeated



them. Haider Chak fled away to Lahore where Raja Man Singh, the Mughul Governor, took him under his protection. The forces returned to Kashmir. In the year 1586 A.D. Raja Bhagwan Dass, one of the generals of Mughal emperor, invaded Kashmir and took Yusuf Chak as a prisoner. He, however, died in September 1592 and was buried at Biswak in Bihar.

### **Mughal Attack Repulsed -1606 A.D.**

In 1606 A.D. Mirza Ali Akbar, the Mughal Governor of Kashmir from 1601 to 1606 A.D., under the orders of emperor Jehangir sent an army under the commanders Mirza Haider Koka and Mirza Mohd. Khan Mughal via Marbal Pass against the Chak rebels who had taken refuge in Rajmandal Kishtwar. A fierce battle was fought near Chatru village. Aiba Chak, brother of Yusuf Chak, fought on the side of the Raja. Mughal forces were severely beaten back. Mirza Mohd Khan along with many soldiers were killed in the battle field. Mirza Haider Koka fled away to Kashmir. Chak rebels, thereafter, lived peacefully in Kishtwar.

### **Mughal Invasion of Kishtwar -1620 A.D.**

During the reign of Gaur Singh (1618-29 A.D.) Mughal emperor Jehangir, while in Kashmir, ordered Mughal Governor of Kashmir Dilwar Khan to reduce Kishtwar and imprison its ruler. Accordingly in 1620 A.D. the Governor sent 10,000 strong force against Kishtwar under the command of Jalal Khan with Ali Malik and Nassar Ullah Arab via Braribal Pass (Doda), Jamal Khan via Margan Pass and Dilawar Khan himself led a force via Marbal Pass and Singpur. He crossed the pass at a height of 3670 metres above sea level and reached Passarkut in Chatru area. Aiba Chak, the fugitive was waiting with a strong force on the side of Raja Gaur Singh of Kishtwar. A fierce battle was fought at Passarkut in which Aiba Chak along with many of his soldiers were killed. The force had to retreat to Kishtwar. Dilawar Khan occupied Rajmandal and proceeded towards Kishtwar. The forces of the Raja on way back to Kishtwar cut off Bhandarkut

Bridge (Jullah). Dilawar Khan with his force had to encamp at Brinji Bagh (Garden of Brinji trees) for four months and ten days. The other forces from Margan side and Braribal side also joined them at this place. With the help of a Zamindar a zampha (jullah) was constructed at a place near Bhandarkut during the night hours. Dilawar Khan's son Jalal Khan with a force of about 200 crossed the zampha safely and made an attack in the morning on the Raja who was taken unawares. A fierce battle took place near Alkah, the then capital of Kishtwar, now called Ukala near Sarkut. The Raja was defeated and taken as a prisoner. Raja had already sent his family to the care of Jaswan principality. Raja was brought before the emperor in chains and then sent to Gawaliar fort. Nasar-Ullah Arab was appointed as administrator of Kishtwar, who proved an utter failure. There was an upheaval throughout Kishtwar and Nasar-Ullah was killed.

#### **Invasion of Mughlani Begum-1622 A.D.**

In 1622 A.D. the next governor of Kashmir, Iradat Khan marched towards Kishtwar with a strong force to quell the uprising. He had sudden attack on the forces who were defeated and uprising quelled. He allowed widow of either Nasar Ullah Arab or Mohd. Khan or some other noble, known as Mughlani Begum, to rule over Kishtwar. She camped at a place known as Garhbagh where she laid out a garden and constructed an embarkment of earth around it. She stayed only for about three months, during which period she started a reign of terror. Meanwhile Raja Gaur Singh was released from Gawaliar prison and Kishtwar was bestowed upon him.

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## History of Paddar— The Land of Sapphire

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Paddar, the land of sapphire, is a tehsil of Kishtwar district. It was raised to the status of tehsil in 2005 and on July 6, 2006 it was approved for Atholi tehsil. It is bounded by Zanskar on the north, Pangi on the east, Bhalesa on the south and Nagseni Pargana on the west. The boundary of Paddar lays through Liddrari Nala, the gateway to Paddar, and crosses river Chander Bhaga separating Chhichha from Sazar. Atholi, the headquarter of Atholi tehsil, is on an alluvial plateau, 6360 feet (1938.5 metre) above sea level. It was situated on the left bank of Chandra Bagha river at latitude  $33^{\circ}10'$  and longitude  $76^{\circ}10'$ . It has a widest opening and is the chief place in Paddar about 200 feet above the river. On the opposite bank is a wide plain called Gulabgarh which with the passage of time has emerged into a township. Many Govt. offices have been established at this place. Bhutna river flowing from Machail side meets Chander Bhaga river, coming from Lahul and Sipti in Himachal Pradesh, near Gulabgarh previously called Chhattergarh. From this place the area branches off into two valleys – Sohal- Ishtihari valley and Massu-Machail valley. Tun is the remotest village in Gandhari Nala which separates Paddar from Himachal Pradesh, whereas Suncham, the highest inhabited village situated at an elevation of 3385 metres from sea level is the farthest habitation in Massu –Machail valley. Suncham links Paddar with Padam in Zanskar after crossing Umasi La or Bardhar pass at a height of 5340 metres above sea level. Atholi is linked with Kishtwar, headquarter of Kishtwar district, by a motorable

road. On completion of Gulabgarh Ishtihari road Paddar will be linked with Pangi of Himachal Pradesh via Sansari which is about two kilometres from village Thumb of Ishtihari Pargana.

According to census 2001 the population of Paddar was 19,399 including 1869 scheduled caste and 2,332 as scheduled tribe which may have gone to 25,100 including 2,418 as scheduled caste and 3018 as scheduled tribe on 31-12-2006 as per decadal growth rate of 29.04%. Atholi tehsil consists of 32 revenue villages namely Sazar, Kidru, Jar, Kadail, Afani, Atholi, Hamori, Ladar, Massu, Mati, Layee, Ligri Pandail, Kundal, Palali, Chashoti, Hangu, Machail, Losaini, Garh, Leondi, Gulabgarh, Kaban, Sohal, Ongai, Tun, Muthal, Chag, Batwas, Ishtihari, Tiyyari, & Chitto.

Paddar is famous world over for Sapphire mines, Zera (cuminseed), edible pine seed called Chilgoza and thangi (forest apricot). Paddar forests abound in some of the finest quality of deodar, kail, chir, spruce etc. On mountain tops birch trees are also found. The jungles of paddar are infested with ferocious animals like leopard, wolf, bear, lion and tiger, besides stag, deer, forest goat, hedge-hog, musk deer, porcupine, ibex etc. People have domesticated cows buffaloes, bulls, sheep, goat and yak also. Wheat, maize, rice, gram, trumba and other coarse grains and pulses are produced in the area. Forests of paddar are also a source of medicinal herbs, spices etc. Kuth, zera, guchhi and dhoop are also found in these jungles.

Tattapani, a village about five kms from Atholi on way back to Kishtwar is a wonderful place and a picturesque spot which abounds in hot springs every where. A large tract of land in the vicinity of the village is full of hot springs ranging from extremely hot to lukewarm water. People from far off places flock to these hot springs for taking bath and getting themselves relieved of their rheumatic diseases and troubles. A dharamshala has been constructed at this place for common people who come there from all over the tehsil and outside. There is a tank in which hot water gushes out. This tank is given a good cleansing every year by some people from Chitto village.



Around Machail valley there are some of the highest peaks like Barnaj-I 6100 metres, Barnaj-II 6290 metres and Shiv Ling 6000 metres above sea level. These peaks remain snow clad throughout and have not been scaled so far. Sapphire mines are located at a height of about 14000 feet or 4267 metres on the mountain top above Suncham village some 40 kms away from Atholi on way to Padam (Zanskar) from Machail via Umasi La.

### **Chander Bhaga River**

The Chandra and Bhaga, the two main streams, rise on the opposite side of Bara Lacha Pass at a height of 5100 metres in Lahul Sipiti of Himachal Pradesh. Chandra rises in Lahul and issues from a large snow bed on the south eastern side of Bara lacha at a height of 16221 feet (4944 metres) and Bhaga rises on the north western slopes of the pass. After traversing 88 Kms the Chandra joins Bhaga near Tandi after flowing 104 Kms. Now the united streams known as Chandra-Bhaga river flows through Pangi valley of the erstwhile Chamba state and then enters Paddar at Sansari in Kishtwar district at an elevation of 6000 feet (1829 metres). The Greeks named Chandra Bhaga as Sandrophagus which means devourer of Alexander, the conqueror. The Bhot Nala flowing from Machail side of Paddar joins Chander Bhaga near Atholi, the headquarter of Atholi tehsil. Some more streams join the river till it reaches Bhandarkut near Kishtwar to join Mariev Sudhar or Marwa river. From this place onwards it is now called Chenab river. Its Sanskrit name is Asikini.

The Chander Bhaga river divides Paddar into two parts. Some villages of Paddar like Chitto, Atholi, Kundal, Jar, Tatapani, Karthai and Kidru are on its left side whereas all other villages are on the right side. Atholi is about 200 feet (61 metres) down below whereas Gulabgarh and Sohal are just near the bank of the river on right side. The river has to traverse about 611 kilometres (380 miles) from Bara Lacha to Akhnur between steep mountains and then through the lower hills.

A mighty power potential "Dul Hasti Hydro Electric Power Project" has been constructed over the river Chander Bagha,



which generates 390 Mega Watt power. Former Prime Minister of our country Smt. Indira Gandhi laid the foundation of this project on April 15, 1983. Now the project has been completed and commissioned in April, 2007. The project is going to change the destiny of the area. The tunnel, about ten Kilometres in length, has been bored from Dul to Hasti beneath Kishtwar plateau. The water of Chander Bagha will be diverted from Dul to Hasti.

The climate of Paddar is rigorous. In winter it is snowing heavily, which some times measures about 4 to 5 feet. People store the commodities for the winter months much in advance.

### History of Paddar

Paddar had been ruled by petty Ranas from times immemorial. A Rana ruled his Rajwara consisting of three to five villages. It was inhabited mostly by Thakur community, though Harijans also lived there. Brahmans were in minority. Muslims migrated from Kishtwar are found settled at Atholi and Afani only. In some villages like Suncham, Hango, Haloti, Lussani, Kaban, Chag, Tun and Chakori Bhuddhist live in majority. Dress diet and culture of Paddaries was somewhat different from Kishtwari culture in olden days, but now people of this area have also adopted the same dress, diet and culture. People were mostly serpent worshippers but they observed other Hindu rites and rituals as well. One sees temples raised to different Nag-devtas or serpent gods, which are adorned with wood carvings of snakes of many forms. Each village has a temple of its deity, the doors of which are adorned with wood carvings of snakes. The doors are opened only once in a month, on a particular day, preferably on the day of sankranti - the first day of each month of Bikrami <sup>era</sup> ~~area~~. The Ranas used to realize some grain for their maintenance from the people of their Rajwaras. They also collected woolen blankets and forest products from the inhabitants of their locality. This way they administered their Rajwaras and defended their Rajwaras from the invasions of other Ranas.



### **Invasions of Kishtwar Rajas**

Raja Rai Dev, the ruler of Kishtwar state, was first Raja who deputed his wazir Mangal Rai for the conquest of Paddar. He defeated the Ranas of Jar & Kadail and brought this whole area under his control. He established his master's rule in the conquered territory and returned to Kishtwar triumphantly after amassing large booty consisting of cash, cows, bulls, sheep and goats. Raja Sangram Singh of Kishtwar invaded Sazar and brought it under his control. However, Paddar area beyond these areas enjoyed independence under their Ranas.

### **Rana Shetal Singh**

In the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century the name of one strong man Rana Shetal Singh emerged in Paddar history, who played an important role. He was a Rana of his Rajwara comprising few villages with his head quarters at Leondi village. He extended his empire by defeating neighbouring Ranas and consolidated it. At Leondi, about 4 Kms from Atholi, he had a mansion where from he administered his estate with his capability. After conquering the neighbouring areas he established his capital at a new place Shetalgarh named after his name. This place is now called Gulabgarh. He gave good governance to his people and constructed forts at various places for the safeguard of his empire. He also built a fort at Shetalgarh. However, there was simmering discontent against him. The defeated Ranas, under some conspiracy, provoked Raja Chatur Singh, the ruler of Chamba, against Raja Shetal Singh.

### **Conquest of Paddar by Raja of Chamba**

Accordingly, Raja Chatur Singh crossed Sansari Jullah (foot bridge) with a band of about two hundred soldiers and had a sudden attack on the forces of Raja Shetal Singh. The forces were caught unawares. The invading forces pounced upon Raja Shetal Singh's forces that lead to a fierce battle between the two at Shetalgarh. The forces were defeated and put to sword. Shetal Singh fought bravely, but was ultimately killed in the battle field.



Thus ended the rule of local Ranas. Shetalgarh was renamed as Chaturgarh after the name of Raja Chatur Singh of Chamba which got the popular name of Chhatergarh in due course of time. The fort at Shetalgarh and the Shetal Singh's mension at Leondi were destroyed and a new fort was constructed at Chaturgarh. After Chatur Sihgh's reign the Raja's of chamba exercised their sovereignty over Paddar for six seven generations. The Ranas of Paddar were restored back to their original positions and were appointed as Kardars or revenue collectors in their respective Rajwaras. The area enjoyed peace and prosperity thereafter.

### **Rattanu Palsar of Paddar**

When the last ruler of Kishtwar Raja Mohd. Teg Singh surrendered to Dogra Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu in 1821 A.D., Rattan Singh, one of the Wazirs of Teg Singh, fled away to Chamba and took shelter or refuge under its Raja Charat Singh. The Raja appointed him as Palsar or chief official of Paddar territory. Thus he became the administrator of Paddar. He proved to be a good administrator of his time. In about 1825 A.D. he marched against Zanskar and attacked Padam. He defeated Gayalpo (Raja) of Padam who acknowledged the suzerainty of Raja of Chamba. This was a great achievement for Rattan Singh of Paddar who was popularly known as Rattnu Palsar.

In 1835 A.D. two generals of Maharaja Gulab Singh, under the command of Zorawar Singh Kalhoria, the Governor of Kishtwar, after conquering Zanskar returned to Kishtwar via Paddar after crossing Umasi La or Bardhar pass. They were Mehta Basti Ram and Wazir Lakhpat of Kishtwar who had joined the administration of Gulab Singh in 1821 A.D. They kept a contingent of about 30 men in Chhatargarh to keep up the communication with their garrison in Zanskar. Meanwhile the people of Zanskar raised a standard of revolt against Dogra rule and the Dogra garrison had been put to the sword. On hearing this Rattan Singh stirred up the people and captured the Dogra soldiers. Some of



them were sent to Chamba as prisoners. This annoyed the great conqueror General Zorawar Singh the Governor of Kishtwar. This became the cause for the Dogra conquest of Paddar.

### **Conquest of Paddar by the Dogra Chief**

In the spring of 1836 A.D. Zorawar Singh marched in person against the forces of Rattanu Palsar with a large force of about 300 soldiers to avenge the insult meted out to him. Rattanu Palsar broke down the bridge over Chander Bagha river, the only link from Atholi to the other two valleys. It took about three months to construct a Julla bridge over Bhotnala with stout ropes in order to advance under the cover of night and enter Chhatargarh. The Chamba forces under Rattan Singh were defeated and the fort was raised to ground. Some people of Paddar were hanged while some others were mutilated. The territory of Paddar was thus annexed to Kishtwar. Chhatargarh was named as Gulabgarh and a new fort at the site of the old one was erected. The debris of the old fort and the town of Chhatargarh is still found at Gulabgarh behind the fort. Rattan Singh fled away to Chamba but the Raja of Chamba, in order to keep good relations with the Dogra ruler, sent him to Jammu as a prisoner. However, the Dogra Raja released him from the prison after about 4 years and took him into his service. Paddar thus became a pargana of Kishtwar. In 1838 A.D. when Zorawar Singh returned to Kishtwar via Umasi La, he built a fort at Chashoti on way to Gulabgarh from Machail.

### **Land Revenue System in Paddar**

The Chamba rulers introduced for the first time the system of realizing one fourth of produce in kind, from the land owners as land revenue, through the old Rana families, who were allowed to hold their own land free of all assessment and in lieu of their services were allowed allowance in kind in addition to the muafis. Later on it was assessed at the rate of rupees five to eight per lehri of six ploughs, as plough was taken to represent four and a half ghumouns. Rupee was equal to 14 annas.



### **Discovery of Sapphire Mines of Paddar**

There was a chance discovery of sapphire mines in Paddar pargana in 1881 A.D., during the Dogra rule of Maharaja Ranbir Singh. The mines are located at a height of about 4,267 metres or 14,000 feet above sea level on the mountain top above Sunchan village some 40 kilometres from Atholi. In 1881 A.D. there was hardly any habitation in the village. Suncham is 3385 metres or 1100 feet above sea level. Maharaja appointed an officer to look after the affairs of these mines. Necessary measures were taken to protect the mines. In 1882 and 1883 A.D. the working on the mines yielded about 7,2207 tolas and fetched about 4 lakh rupees in the world market for which Paddar earned name and fame. A department of mining was established in 1909 A.D. which was later on named as J&K Minerals Ltd. The extraction work has been stopped for the last two decades.

### **Calamities in Paddar**

During the winter of 1978-79 village Batwas in Gandhari Nala of Paddar was washed away by an avalanche which slid down from the nearby hill top. The area experienced the heaviest snowfall during this period with the result that the houses of the village were washed away. Only a few houses built on an elevated place were saved. Nearly 48 persons were buried alive under the debris. Many families were rendered helpless. The fear of the catastrophe lasted for many years.

In the winter of 1978 A.D. village Lussani in Machail valley of Paddar got gutted mysteriously. People were rendered homeless and suffered a lot. Timber for construction of their houses was supplied to the sufferers free of cost.

On December 23, 2006 fire broke out in one of the villages in Ongai area of Paddar, where about 17 houses were gutted and 107 villagers were rendered homeless. Voluntary organizations from Kishtwar rendered all possible help to the fire victims. Chief Minister Sh. G.N. Azad, M.L.A. Kishtwar Sh. S.A. Kichloo, M.L.C Sh. Brij Mohan Sharma and many local leaders from



Kishtwar visited the spot to assess the loss and to render all possible help to the victims.

### **Development of Education**

A Primary School was opened at Tatapani Paddar by Maharaja Partap Singh some time during 1900 A.D. Previously there were pathshalas working at some places which imparted education to the people as per need of the society. During the democratic rule since 1947 A.D. many Primary and Middle schools were opened. High School Atholi was raised to the status of a Higher Secondary School in 1986 A.D., which was previously raised to the status of a High School in 1966 A.D. At present there are about five High Schools including Girls High School Atholi. Other high schools are at Masu, Machail, Sohal and Ligri.

### **Governor Jag Mohan's Visit to Atholi**

During Governors rule over J&K state Governor Sh. Jagmohan paid a visit to Kishtwar and then to Paddar on May 23, 1986 and sanctioned funds for the beautification of Atholi.

### **Paddari Language**

Majority of the people of Paddar speak Paddari which is sweet pahari language like Bhaderwahi but has very less resemblance with it. Buddhist of Paddar living in Buddhist villages around Machail, Kabban, Tun Chakori etc. speak Bodhi but they understand and speak Paddri as well. They have migrated from Ladakh some time in the past but have preserved their own language Ladakhi or Bodhi. Muslims, however, speak Kishtwari-Kashmiri. Folk songs in Paddari have got great charm and are source of amusement and enjoyment. Paddari poets have composed such sweet and bewitching songs as are poised to make good contribution to its literature and culture. They are contributing solidly towards the development of Paddari poetry and folk songs. Rattan Lal of Gulabgarh, Jia Lal Palsar of Tatapani, Shadi Lal of Masu, Sobha Ram and Nath Ram of Atholi and Bhagat Ram of Sohal are some of the leading poets of Paddar. They have



composed hymns and songs on a variety of themes. They have done a tremendous job in inspiring the people of Paddar who struggle for the redressal of their grievances.

### **Gulabgarh Mela**

A grand fair is held at Gulabgarh every year on the first day of Assuj (Ashwan Sankriti). People from all over Paddar come to see the fair. Folk singers and folk dancers entertain the public throughout the night. A big fire is lit in the Mela round which people sing and dance. "Chela," a devotee of the diety, who is supposed to possess some supernatural power, performs many acts of astonishment. He walks over the glowing embers bare footed without any harm. One of the Chelas brings a small tree uprooted from the nearby jungle at the dawn of the day in the fair. People get excited over the great feats of these Chelas. A temporary bazaar is also set up at the site of the Mela. People purchase articles of their choice. Fairs are also held at various other places in Paddar villages.

### **Machail Yatra**

Recently village Machail in Paddar has turned out to be important place of religious importance & sanctity because of the temple of 'Chandi Mata'. On the day of first Bhadon or Bhadoon Sankranti (15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> August) every year, when the doors of temples in Paddar are thrown open, a big mela is held outside Chandi Mata temple at Machail where people from all over Paddar assemble and offer prayers to the diety and invoke her blessings. A mace or Holly Chhari of goddess Chandi Mata is taken out by the devotees from village Chinote Bhadarwah, the home village of Thakur Kulbir Singh. Under his auspicious control a procession is taken to Machail with people singing bhajans in praise of the goddess amidst beating of drums, playing upon flutes and chanting of mantras. Now-a-days the yatra is also taken out from Jammu. Thousands of devotees join the yatra. This yatra has played the greatest role in highlighting the peculiarities of Paddar and influencing among people the spirit of adventure.



### **Architecture and Sculpture of Paddar**

A few miles from Atholi towards Massu and Machail an image of Nandi-Shiva's bull, stands sculptured in front of Shiva temple at Leondi. It has been sculptured from a hard sand stone with all physical features, contours and impressions indigenously disposed of by local sculptors. The statue is about 4 feet in length and three feet in height. A saddle sculptured over the hump and fringed with design is clearly visible on the back of the Nandi. A Gana, Lord Shiva's attendant, is also seen sculptured in the rear of the statue.

Many household articles such as utensils, pestles, mortars etc are sculptured even at present in some parts of Paddar. Chiselling, cutting and finishing of stone is remarkable and appreciable in this type of stone art. The artists are still at work to continue their traditional stone art.

### **Dress and Diet**

In some villages of Paddar we find people wearing woollen shirts, woollen trousers and a cap covering the head and the ears locally called "Kantop". They wear grass shoes of a particular type which is bound on heels and has a pointed nose locally named as "Pulhor". In winter it is stuffed with rags of woollen clothes which keep the wearer warm and fit for travel over snow clad roads and foot paths. Ladies put on a "Choga" with a girdle of woollen cloth. However, all this is going under a great change and people have started wearing cotton clothes. Modern fashion has also crept in the society. Their dress includes now pants, coats, shirts, for gents and Kameez, Shilwarr, Dupata blouse and sari for ladies. Jackets are also used by gents. Leather shoes and sandals are now used by ladies. Women also put on gold or silver necklace, bracelets, ear rings, rings etc. The diet of the people of Paddar includes wheat, maize, rice, barley and pulses. In Machail area grim & trumba are also used. Tea is not common there. Milk and milk products is a speciality of Paddar. Fruit production is rare. However, wild grown vegetables and fruits are available.

### **Militants Attacked Sharoti Dhar in Paddar**

Militants gunned down 13 persons and critically wounded five other persons on 3-8-2001 at village Luddar in Paddar area on Sharoti Dhar. Only three persons were able to flee from the clutches of the militants. All the victims were putting up in the dhok at higher reaches of Luddar along with their cattle. Militants suddenly appeared there in the darkness of night and opened indiscriminate firing. The whole area of Paddar was plunged into grief and sorrow. The victims belonged to Luddar and Kundal villages of Paddar.

### **Video Coach Accident Near Shashu**

A Video Coach No. 6949 JKO2T belonging to Karan travels, which was on way from Atholi to Jammu, rolled down into river Chandra Bhaa near village Shashu about 20 Kms from Atholi on 7-4-2006 in the morning. Out of about fifty passengers only three passengers could jump out of the coach and swam to safety. Three dead bodies were fished out from the river. All efforts of the administration for fishing out dead bodies were unsuccessful. This was the greatest tragedy which sent shock waves through out the entire Kishtwar area.

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## History of Marwa, Warwan and Dachhan

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Marwa-Warwan is a long narrow valley lying to the south-east of Kashmir and north – west of Kishtwar district headquarter. It is separated by lofty range of mountains. It is about 60 km in length and 1½ km. in breadth. The sides on either side of Marwa river, locally called Mariev Sudher (Marud vridha of Rig Ved) are very steep. The upper portion of the valley is called Warwan and the lower portion is called Marwa. Marwa – Warwan is linked with Anantnag district of Kashmir by Margan and Hukhsar passes at a height of about 4470 mt and 4300 mt. respectively above sea level whereas Suru Zanskar is linked with Marwa – Warwan valley by Bhot Kol or Lanwilla pass at a height of about 4421 mts. above sea level. Nunkhun mountain top with a height of about 7135 mts. above sea level stands as a guard against any onslaught from this side. Warwan valley is most beautiful and picturesque valley in Kishtwar district, which abounds in various natural vegetations springs, forests, wild animals and medicinal herbs.

Marwa Warwan was a Pargana of erstwhile Kishtwar state which had approximately an area of about 872 square kilometres with a population of 20,351 souls as per census 2001. Marwa was ancient rajwara or hill principality founded by one Deep Sen, the third son of Raja Kahan Pal of Kishtwar state – the first historical king of Kishtwar, hailing from Gaur Bengal. Raja Deep Sen independently carved out this principality of Marwa with the help of a small contingent of force from Kishtwar to try his luck there. Not a single drop of blood was shed for establishing his

rule in Marwa. Due to the remoteness from the capital of Kahan Pal, it maintained its independence under his successors. Kalhana, the author of *Rajatarangini* written in 1148 - 49 A.D. had not even mentioned the name of Marwa or Warwan valley. It had no relation of any kind with Kashmir kingdom. Bamzai, the author of "History of Kashmir" says at page 181, "We have no reference of this tract in *Rajatarangini* and it is doubtful if this belonged to the Kashmir kingdom under Hindu rule." It came into contact with Kashmir Governors at a very late stage. The descendants of Raja Deep Sen were converted to Islam in seventeenth century during Mughal rule and title of 'Malik' was conferred on the Ranas, the descendants of the Raja. The first converttee of the ruling class was Rana Lutaf Ullah Khan. During this period one Mukhtar Malik was the chief of Marwa-Warwan. R.C. Kak writes in "Antiquities of "Marev- Wardwan" at page 15, "Mukhtar Malik of Marev, commonly known as Mukhta Raja, is descended from one Lutaf Ullah Khan, who is said to have come from Bengal at what time is not known. Their original patronymic seems to have been 'Raina' (should be Rana) which is often associated with their names in the Mughal farmans (orders) and other documents preserved in the family". During the reign of Mughal emperor Jehangir in 1620 A.D., Dilawar Khan, the Governor of Kashmir was ordered to reduce Kishtwar. Accordingly, he despatched, for the first time, a force under Jamal Khan, one of his generals, via Margan pass. This force passed through Warwan Marwa, Dachhan valley before joining other two forces at Bhandarkut – the confluence of Chandra Bhaga and Marev Sudhar (Marwa river). Till then Marwa valley was not known to Kashmir rulers and later on to Mughal and Afghan governors.

The name of Marwa seems to have been derived from a hymn of Nadi Sukhta 10/75/5 mentioned in the tenth book of Rig Ved which mentions the name Marud Vridha (the wind swelled), a river which flows from north to south through Warwan and Marwa valley of erstwhile Kishtwar State, which was down graded to a province in 1821 A.D., and then to a district in 1875 A.D. and finally to a tehsil of Udhampur district in 1909 A.D.



Now, it has become a district. This river rises from Saga Glacier on the Bhot Kol pass leading into Suru on the extreme north of Warwan valley and flows southward, joining Chenab or Chandra Bhaga above Kishtwar at Bhandarkut. Its Sanskrit name is Asikini. Near Dadpath Chatru nallah joins this river. The Rig Vedic hymn runs as under:

*Attend to this my song of praise O Ganga,  
Yamuna, Saraswati, Sutudri, Purushri,  
Together with Asikini, O Marud Vridha and with  
Vitasta, O Arj-ikiya, listen with Sushoma.*

Marwa - Warwan valley was populated by Hindus only and before 17<sup>th</sup> century A.D. no Mohamman or any other community lived in erstwhile Kishtwar state of which Marwa - Warwan was one of the eleven parganas. It was in about 1657 A.D. during Raja Jai Singh's rule of Kishtwar that a few Mohamman were allowed to live in Kishtwar. His son Kirat Singh was forcibly converted to Islam by Mughal emperor Aurangzeb during his first and last visit of Kashmir in 1664 A.D. Thus started the conversion process. The courtiers of the Raja were first to be converted. Marwa had maintained its independence till the descendant of the Raja of Marwa, then called Rana, Lutaf Ullah Khan joined this faith. By and by the population of Marwa adopted Muslim faith whether by force or conviction is not known. Lutaf Ullah Khan, the first convert, is said by Mughal farmans (orders) to have come from Bengal. This makes the contention of being descendant of Deep Sen, the chief of Marwa principality, clear. Thus both Kishtwar and Marwa were ruled by the same dynasty of Pal who hailed from Gaur Bengal (now called Murshidabad near Dhaka in Bangladesh).

During the reign of Maharaja Gulab Singh (1821 to 1857 A.D.), when Zorawar Singh Kahluria was Governor of Kishtwar province Mukhtar Malik or Mukhta Raja was the chief of Marwa. He organized a regular force from Marwa-Warwan areas. He made friendship with the Maliks of Naubug area of Anantnag district on the other side of Margan. He entered into matrimonial



alliance between his son Afzal and the daughter of Namdar Malik of Noubug. He had contrived to win favours of Mughal and Pathan Governors of Kashmir especially Mir Hazar Khan in 1793 A.D. and agreed to present one hawk, four horses, four goats and twentyone sheep annually. Annual tribute of 60 villages was to be collected by Namdar Malik and after keeping one third for himself the remaining two third was to be sent to Mukhta Raja. This arrangement continued for more than ten years. The descendants of Mukhtar Raja were holding an elevated position than other peasants of Marwa. They were not even headman, Lumberdar or Zaildar of that area but were exempt <sup>from</sup> of forced labour and revenue cess. In Mughal farmans Ranas, descendants of Rajas had been addressed as Raina. Malik was also the title conferred on them.

In 1832 A.D. Kanwar Sher Singh became the Sikh Governor of Kashmir. Mukhta Raja got the contract of revenue collection. He was a tyrant collector and people of Marwa turned against him. Some public representatives of Marwa namely Barkhurdar Malik, Daim Malik, and Zafar Lone approached Uttam Padiar, the Kardar (revenue collector) of Dachhan. Zorawar Singh was Governor of Kishtwar. He lead his first expedition to Ladakh in 1833 A.D. Mukhta Raja fled away to Kashmir without giving any resistance. Later on he was won over to his side by Zorawar Singh. During the expedition to Ladakh 500 soldiers of Marwa, under the command of Barkhurdar Malik, crossed Bhot Kol to help the army of Zorawar Singh. Marwa was annexed to Kishtwar province during 1833-34 A.D.

Village Hanzal, about 90 Km. towards north side of Kishtwar, is the Gateway to Marwa valley. It is populated both by Hindus and Muslims at present. From there the population extends to both sides of the river Marwa upto Yaurdu about one mile or two kilometres from Nowpachi, the capital of Marwa N.E.S. block and tehsil headquarter. From there one branch goes to Renai (Anjer) where famous hot springs of Marwa are situated. People from Kashmir and Kishtwar travel to this place for hot bath and get themselves relieved of rheumatic troubles. This water has



medicinal properties and cures many patients. The other branch where from river Marwa (Marev Sudhar) traverses is called Warwan valley. It is also a N.E.S. block having four Panchayats. Marwa block has six Panchayats. As per the census report of 2001 the population of Marwa is 12,449 while that of Warwan is 7,902. There were 138 souls of Scheduled tribe in Marwa block. It has one higher secondary school and one high school at Dehrna whereas Warwan has only one higher secondary school. There are a number of middle and primary schools in both these blocks.

Marwa-Warwan has 21 revenue villages namely Yaurdu, Teller, Changer, Dehrna, Drarri, Ranai, Pathgam, Qaderna, Nowpachi and Nowgam in Marwa and Arwan, Inshan, Afti, Basmana, Mulwarwan, Brayan, Choidraman, Rikanwas, Sukhnai, Margi, Gomri and Monkli in Warwan area. None of these villages have so far been linked by motorable road either from Kishtwar side or from Kashmir side. Sukhani is the last village in Warwan area. Rikanwas was called Rishiniwas (abode of Rishis) in ancient times where Shiv Lingas (icons) and other remains are found. Rishis or Sages compiled Rig Ved at this place. At present Hindu population is found in village Changer only besides Hanzal.

Large area of Marwa and Warwan is covered with thick forests of pine and spruce trees whereas deodar is rare. These forests on hilly slopes of this valley are infested with wild animals like Stage, Ibex (Kail), Thar (Mountain goat), Kras, Lion, Leopard, Tiger, Porcupine etc. People have domesticated horses, cows, buffaloes, bulls, sheep, goat, dog, etc. In forests medicinal herbs and herbal plants are found in plenty. People collect these products for sale and earn their livelihood. Crops like paddy, wheat, buck, amaranth, maize, etc. are produced in this valley. Beans (Rajmash), Walnut, and Ambri apples of this pargana are famous and are exported to other parts of the state.

Climate of Marwa Warwan valley is rigorous and at places it is temperate in summer months. This valley experiences heavy snowfall during winter months. People have built their houses in such a manner that snowfall has no effect on them. They store

atables and other items of daily consumption in advance of the advent of winter.

### **Period of Calamities in Marwa-Warwan**

On 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 fire broke out in Qadarna village of Marwa at night. Eighteen houses were completely gutted and two were partially gutted.

On the night of 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2007 Margi village of Warwan area was reduced to ashes in a devastating blaze. 160 houses and nearly 100 cowsheds were gutted in the fire. 107 persons sustained injuries and 1500 people were rendered homeless. The government provided all possible help and relief to the victims.

## **HISTORY OF DACHHAN**

### **Geographical Features**

The tract from Ekhala to Hanzal is known as Dachhan. It is a land locked area quite independent of either Marwa or Kishtwar although it has been a part of Marwa tehsil. On the upgradation of Marwa Niabat as tehsil in the year 2005, Dachhan was given the status of a Niabat under Marwa tehsil. Previously it was a pargana of erstwhile Kishtwar tehsil. It has an area of 100.50 sq. Kms. out of 873 sq. Kms. of Marwa tehsil comprising five revenue villages of Chichha Dachhan, Lohrna, Janakpur, Lopara and Sonder. It has nine panchayat Halqas and four patwar Halqas. Population of Dachhan as per census 2001 was 10,278 souls which may have gone to 12,367 as per 29.04% decadal growth rate on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2007. Panjdhara, the chief village of Dachhan, is situated on the left bank of Mariev Sudher river. This river bisects the valley into two with better half of population on left side. It joins Chandra Bhaga at Bhandarkut.

The bridal path from Ekhala to Sonder in Dachhan, a distance of about 15 Kms. passes through a dense forest of deodar and conifer trees without having any habitation except at Pinjrari village which is situated about a kilometer from road side at



Lohlu. Likewise from Lopara to Hanzal another 15 Kms. tract is also covered by forests without any habitation in between. Thus Ekhala is the Gateway to Dachhan from Kishtwar side and Hanzal is the Gateway to Marwa from Dachhan side. The distance from Bus stand Kishtwar to Panjdihara by foot is about 50 Kms. and from Nowpachi Marwa to Panjdihara it is about 32 Kms. Thus Dachhan is geographically neither linked to Kishtwar nor to Marwa. It is a separate entity. Lofty hills stand guard over it on all sides. Snow clad Brahma peaks 6416 and 6110 metre, Sickel Moon 6575 metre, Thunthur or Crooked Finger 5710 metre and Arjuna peak 6200 metre above sea level all enhance the beauty of Dachhan and beckon the trekkers to lead expeditions on these high mountains. Except Sickel Moon none of these mountain cliffs have so far been scaled.

### **Sacred Places in Dachhan**

Dachhan branches out in three 'nalas' called Nanth Nala, Kibber Nala and Kiyar Nala. All these 'nalas' have habitations on higher reaches. Kibber Nala which branches off near Sonder village is a famous nala for its antiquity. Hymns of Athar Ved have been composed in this nala long long ago which gave sanctity to this whole area. Nanth Nala is a highly revered valley as the holly sacred places like Brahmsar, Kaikut wooden temple, Trisandhya, Hud Mata and Bathastal cave are located in this valley. Brahmsar, a small lake of icy cold water, is surrounded by all the peaks of Brahma mountain. Pilgrims come to this place for having a dip in its water during summer months for their purification. The water of this lake flows through the middle of Sattarchin, a grassy maidan, and about 4 Km. down below on the left side of the stream Trisandhya stream occasionally flows down a hill thrice a day to join the main stream coming from Brahmsar. Trisandhya is a miracle of nature and a gift to humanity. Pilgrims come from far off places to find an opportunity for a bath. Some get a chance to bathe in the stream which is instantly seen receding upwards. Some return disappointed. On their way to Brahmsar pilgrims offer their prayers in the temples of Hud Mata



and Kaikut. Bathastal, a long shallow natural grotto is about a kilometre from Suid. It has a narrow mouth through which water flows and the visitors have to pass through a tunnel, with torches, to reach a spacious chamber on the ceiling of which some letters in Brahmi script are found inscribed. R.C. Kak, the author of "Antiquities in Marev-Wardwan," has given a full description of this cave at page 25 of the book. This shows that the sages used such secluded places for compiling and composing hymns of sacred scriptures. However, this area has been ignored by the successive governments and no effort seems to have been made to bring these parts of scenic beauty on the tourist map of India for their development. Kiyar Nala is another valley branching off near Chhicha to Kiyar, a village at a distance of about 10 Kms. from Panjdihara Dachhan. It has dense forest all along the route. Hot springs are situated at this place. By climbing up a hill in front of Kiyar village on its right side one finds an easy access to Dehrna village of Marwa thereby saves a long distance in covering the route via Lopara to Hanzal village and then to Nowpachi, the headquarter of Marwa tehsil.

### **History of Dachhan**

In about 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Deep Sen, son of Kahan Pal, the first historical ruler of Kishtwar, marched via Dachhan then ruled by local Ranas, to Marwa where he founded a small principality for himself. Dachhan, though conquered by Deep Sen, maintained its independence because of its remoteness both from Marwa and Kishtwar principalities. During the reign of Lachhman Dev, Raja of Kishtwar, an expedition was led by the Raja himself to crush the authority of local chiefs. He put them to sword and established his authority over Dachhan which became a pargana of Kishtwar. It was ever since been ruled by Kishtwar Rajas.

The descendants of Deep Sen were converted to Islam. They came into contact with the governors of Kashmir. During this period one Mukhtar Malik, commonly known as Mukhta Raja, was chief of Marwa. He was descendant of Lutuf Ullah Khan who descended from Deep Sen and changed his religion.



Mukhta Raja got the contract for revenue collection of Marwa during the Sikh rule of Kashmir in 1829 A.D. He proved a tyrant collector who fleeced people. People of Marwa rose against him and lodged a complaint to Uttam Padiar, the Kardar of Dachhan, under Zorawar Singh, the Governor of Kishtwar through their leaders Barkhurdar Malik, Diam Malik and Zaffar Lone. This became a cause for the annexation of Marwa to Kishtwar in 1834 A.D. There is no mention of Marwa, Warwan or Dachhan in Kalhan's Rajatarangini written in 1148-49 A.D. This shows that this whole tract was not known to Kings of Kashmir. As such, Dachhan being part of Kashmir kingdom under King Ananta as described by R.C. Kak in "Antiquities of Marev-Wardwan" at page 25 has no base what so ever on the ground that Nant Dev of Sirshi Dachhan, the name inscribed on a big granite boulder in Sharda script near Sirshi, was a local chief and had no connection with king Ananta of Kashmir. This has been clarified in the chapter "Distortions in Kishtwar History". Dachhan was carved out of Kishtwar and it became a niabat of Kishtwar tehsil.

## History of Doda, Ramban and Banihal

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The area from Barshala village on the right side of the river Chandra-Bhaga to Pirpanchal, comprising present Doda, Ramban and Banihal tesils was once a part of Kishtwar kingdom. This area was linked with Kishtwar kingdom by a Jullah bridge called Seighat near Kandni on the National High Way IB. The old name from Seighat to Doda was Mahabal. This area was not a separate state like Bhadarwah, Basohli, Chenani etc. It was ruled by local chiefs like Ranas, Rathas, Katoch, Manhas, Chib, Thakur, Gakhar. In Siraz area Ranas ruled over the Rajwaras, while Katoch ruled over Doda, Dessa and Pogal Paristan. Kastigarh was under Bahu, Manhas and Chib chiefs. Ramban and Kanthi were ruled by Thakurs. Banihal was under Pal, Wain and Gakhar chiefs. Besides, Mahu Mangat was ruled by local chiefs and Dangbattal, which also formed part of Kishtwar kingdom, was under Rais – a Rajput subcaste. Thus the whole area was parcelled out into various Rajwaras, each rajwara being ruled by local chief. There was no central government which could consolidate the kingdom under one rule. Rajas of Kishtwar often invaded Banihal area then called Banshala. It was under these circumstances that Kishtwar Rajas led various expeditions to conquer this land and annexed it to Kishtwar kingdom. Raja Bhagwan Singh brought Kanthi, Ramban, Dangbattal, Pogal Paristan and Banihal under his control by defeating local chiefs. Thus the whole area of erstwhile Ramban tehsil and Dangbattal now called Gool was ruled by Kishtwar Kings.



**History of Erstwhile Ramban Tehsil**

Kishtwar kingdom was ruled by independent rulers upto 1821 A.D. when Raja Gulab Singh, the Dogra chief led an expedition to conquer Kishtwar. Without shedding a drop of blood Mohd. Teg Singh, Raja of Kishtwar, surrendered before him at Doda. This way Kishtwar state was annexed to Jammu Kingdom. Ramban remained a part of Kishtwar province under various governors upto 1875 A.D., when it was reduced to the status of a district under Wazir-Wazarat. The erstwhile state of Bhadarwah was also administered by Wazir-Wazarat. This has been established by Shivjee Dhar, the then Wazir-Wazarat of Kishtwar and Bhaderwah, in his authored book "Tarikh-i-Kishtwar" written in persian in 1881 A.D. and published by the department of Research and Publication Jammu and Kashmir Government in 1962 A.D. This arrangement continued upto 1909 A.D., when Kishtwar and Bhaderwah districts were merged with Udhampur district. Ramban, Bhaderwah and Kishtwar formed the three tehsils of Udhampur district. Doda was a Sub-tehsil (Niabat) of Ramban tehsil at that time. In the year 1948 A.D. Doda district was carved out of Udhampur district with Doda as its headquarter. Kishtwar, Ramban and Bhadarwah were three tehsils of Doda district. Doda was given the status of a tehsil in 1954 A.D. and was carved out of Ramban tehsil. Seven Patwar halqas of Bhaderwah tehsil and 15 Patwar halqas of Ramban tehsil were included in Niabat Doda. These were Khalani, Malhori, Mothi, Root, Mangota, Trown and Shiva of Bhaderwah tehsil, and Mahala Gadatar, Sharot, Dhar, Dhara, Jodhpur, Jaithli, Doda, Bhagwah, Kastigarh, Chaka, Dandal, Dessa, Assar, Charota of Ramban tehsil. Bhaderwah was a Jagir of Maharaja and in 1931, it was raised to the status of a tehsil of Udhampur district. Thus district Doda was reorganized. Now, it has been further split in three districts of Kishtwar, Ramban, and Doda. Kishtwar district has four tehsils: Kishtwar, Chatru, Paddar and Marwa whereas Doda district includes Doda, Bhaderwah, Thathri and Gundoo as its tehsils. The hilly Ramban district has two tehsils of Ramban and Banihal with district head quarter at Ramban.



### **Geographical Features of Doda District**

Doda city, the headquarter of Doda district lies between longitude  $75^{\circ}36'$  north and latitude  $33^{\circ}8'$  east. It has 127 revenue villages. Doda town is situated on the right side of river Chander Bhaga about two kilometres height from the river bed on the foot hill of a high mountain. It is 1143 metres above sea level. The area of district Doda is 2,306 sq. Kilometres. Doda used to be the winter capital of Kishtwar Rajas. From Verinag spring in Kashmir to Doda via Braribal pass in the south - east is 46 miles or 73 kilometres in distance. Doda stands connected with other parts of Doda tehsil by a Jullah bridge. From Kishtwar people used to travel via Sehghat bridge situated at Kandni. Now modern types of bridges have been constructed at Sehghat, Thathri, Premnagar and Pull-Doda. The first lever bridge was constructed over the river Chenab at Pull-Doda in 1936 A.D. by the order of Raja Gulab-Singh of Jammu. Doda and Mohalla were famous for the cultivation of poppy. People used to earn their livelihood by selling poppy seeds in the market which was used for making milk for tea, sauces, oil for use in many vegetable products and meat to give special taste or lustre to these items. The population of Doda tehsil as per census 2001 was 1,55,965 and the literacy rate was 46.92 %.

The name Doda emerged from the poppy cultivation in this area which in local dialect was called "Dundo". This with the passage of time changed into Doda. Another version is that a trader, Deeda by name, had established his work of utensil manufacturing at Nagri which became the source of the name of Doda.

The villages of Doda, Mohala, Kastigarh and Kanthi are called Kandi areas. During the reign of Kishtwar Rajas and for a long time thereafter the route from Sehghat to Ramban was used by the travellers. On way to Ramban there was a fort called "Qila Gajpat", where dangerous criminals and rebels were lodged as prisoners. It is situated on a small hill and is surrounded by the river Chenab on its three sides.



Before the rule of Kishtwar Rajas "Nagri" now a village near Doda town was the chief place of Doda. Shah Faridud Din Bagdadi, on his way from Dangbattal to Kishtwar, stayed for some days at Nagri. A Ziarat (place of Pilgrimage) has emerged at this place in the name of Shah Sahib. The erstwhile Rajas had constructed a fort near the village at the top of the slope down to the river Chanab. This fort, which was used by the Rajas of Kishtwar for holding darbars, was demolished in 1952 A.D. and Higher Secondary School building had been constructed on that land.

Lal Draman (a plain picnic spot) on the hill above Doda town is a salubrious place situated at a height of 2,432 metres above sea level. It is a picturesque spot which attracts people from all over the world to find peace and solace in its enchanting beauty.

Kandi area is bare of tree growth and only shrubs are found here and there besides trees like oak, shesham, olive, phalla, kecker, drek and bang etc. In Kandi area of Siraz Pargana pomegranates, apple, apricot, quince are found. On the high reaches deodar, kail, chir and budloo are found. There are green pastures on the higher reaches where people take their buffaloes, sheep, goats and cows for grazing in the pastures. Climate varies from extreme heat in Kandi areas to extreme cold on the higher reaches.

### **Geographical Features of Ramban Tehsil**

During the reign of Maharaja Partap Singh, Ram Dhan Assistant Settlement officer presented Assessment Report of Ramban tehsil to the Mahraja in 1912 A.D. According to this report the area of the tehsil was 571 sq.miles or 1,478 sq.kilometres. However, the present area of Ramban and Banihal tehsils, now a district, is 1,561 sq. kilometres. In 1904 A.D. this tehsil comprised 163 villages including 20 villages of Dangbattal, seven villages of Nandmarg, which were transferred to Reasi, while 13 villages of Kund (Kud) were assessed separately leaving 123 villages to Ramban tehsil. Five villages were amalgamated with others. Thus the tehsil consisted of 118 villages at the time



of settlement. In 1948 A.D., 18 villages of Chenani Jagir and 33 villages of Udhampur tehsil were transferred to Ramban tehsil. These village, were Chakwa Khari, Lodhwal, Trangla, Bhandera, Darhalta, Thupal, Barthal, Shanpa, Batote, Dharmand, Karman, Papriyal, Sawani, Khanchar, Chandarkot, Maitra, Parnote, Khanga, Gandri, Malti, Tanga, Badhol, Banza, Peeri, Dothan, Kothi, Bhatan, Kabhi, Baladat, Swani, Chila, Mana of Udhampur and Karseel, Baggar (Ramgarh) Ganota, Assar, Jathi, Karsu, Khatyar, Ranka, Lalhot, Chasroti, Kharonti, Blandpur, Savot, Bari, Charohta, Reinka, Lahot of Chenani tehsils. Thus boundary of erstwhile Doda district was extended upto Patnitop. In the year 1954 A.D., Doda tehsil was carved out of Ramban tehsil with 127 villages. Fifteen patwar halqas of Ramban were included in Doda tehsil. Its population as per the census 2001 was 86,042.

The old name of Ramban was Nasanban which was changed into Ramban by Maharaja Gulab Singh. It is 680 metres above sea level and lies between longitude  $75^{\circ}17'$  and latitude  $33^{\circ}14'$ . It is situated on the National Highway 128 Km. from Jammu and 175 Kms. from Srinagar. River Chander Bhaga (Chenab) flows on the left side of Ramban town. It served the purpose of a boundary line in the past. A stream rising from the higher reaches of Mahomangat is joined by small streams on its way to Nachlana village, where from the stream is called Bichlari stream. A stream from the Banihal side also joins at this place and becomes a river. It joins the Chenab about nine Kilometres ahead of Ramban. Batote is an important town of this tehsil. At present it is a Niabat. It is situated on the National Highway 121 Kms. from Jammu at a height of 1600 mts. above sea level. It is linked with Udhampur by Patnitop pass at a height of 2060 mts.

### **Banihal Area**

This area lies in between Pir Panchal, Halan and Khadan Dhar. On the west of Banihal is Mahomangat illaqa. A stream rising from the Pir Panchal flows on the right side of Banihal town joins Bichlari stream. The old name of Banihal was Devgol meaning a place of dense forests. Kalhan has given it the name



of Bانشالا in Rajatarangini. It was inhabited by a tribe called Khash who had penetrated from Chingam of Kishtwar to Banihal in a semi circle. This tract was named Khashyalia by Kalhan. The early rulers of Banihal were Dang Pal and Bhagikak who belonged to Khash tribe. It was due to the successive attacks from Kashmir side that Dang Pal was forced to flee to an area called Dangbattal after his name. Later on its name was changed to Gulabgarh after the name of Maharaja Gulab Singh. This area now falls in Reasi district. The area of Banihal was inhabited by Gakhar clan of Panjab and Wain of Kashmir. Thus Hindu, Muslim, Rajput, Brahman, Harijan, Wain, Gakhar, Gujjar and Bakerwal live in this land.

Banihal is now a tehsil of Ramban district. Banihal town is situated 187 kms. from Jammu on the National Highway. It stands at a height of 1660 mts. above sea level. It lies between latitude  $33^{\circ}27'$  and longitude  $75^{\circ}16'$ . Population of Banihal tehsil as per census 2001 was 94,250. It has been linked with Kashmir valley by Jawahar Tunnel which was thrown open for traffic by Dr. Radha Krishnan Vice President of India in 1956.

The climate of Banihal is rigorous. Winter is severe and it experiences heavy snow fall. Summer is pleasant. The slopes around Banihal town are naked. The area from east Banihal to the boundary of Kashmir valley is called Barfani Illaqa (snowy area). It generally remains covered with snow for the better part of the year during winter season. It comprises 41 villages of Pogal, Paristan and upper reaches of Kastigarh. Katoch and Thakur dynasties settled in this area long ago. They ruled the Rajwaras in their area of dwelling. This area is covered with dense forests of deodar, conifer, pine and budlo trees.

### **Historical Background of Doda, Ramban and Banihal**

During the reign of Raja Jagat Singh of Kishtwar in 14<sup>th</sup> CAD, his brother Suraj Singh was dispatched with a huge army to conquer the illaqas on the other side of Seighat bridge. First of all he conquered Barshala and its adjoining areas called Mahabal. This illaqa was named Swraj after the name of Suraj Singh. He



also conquered Kanthi and Pogal areas and annexed these illaqa to Kishtwar kingdom. Till then local chiefs ruled over these rajwaras. His son Bhag Singh led an expedition to bring Doda, Bajarni, Bhaghwa and Kastigarh under his rule. He founded a village and named it Bhaghwa after his name. Thus the area upto Kastigarh became a part of Kishtwar empire. Swraj was later on changed into Siraj and then Siraz.

The local chiefs of Malwana illaqa raised a standard of revolt against the rule of Kishtwar Raja during the reign of Narian Singh in 14<sup>th</sup> century. Raja himself proceeded towards Malwana and brought the area under his rule after defeating the rebels in 40 days. On his way back the village of Barshala was bestowed upon the Brahmans of the village as jagir.

Raja Bijay Singh (Vijay Singh), the successor of Narian Singh, faced resistance from the rebels (descendants of local chiefs) of Siraz who rebelled against the raja in a bid to reoccupy their lost rajwara. It took the Raja 42 days till the rebels were killed and the rebellion quelled. The Raja found a village Bajarni after his name and constructed a fort at the place. On his return he went to Saroor where his whole family had come to meet their relatives. All the members of the Raja's family along with him were massacred by his enemies. His seven years old son, Bhadur Singh, was the only survival. There was, however, no problem in this conquered area of his predecessors till then. In 1635 A.D. Bhagwan Singh ascended the throne of Kishtwar. In the intervening period the Sardars of Kastigarh had again established their rule in the area as the Raja of Kishtwar was busy in fighting against the invaders from Kashmir. Raja Bhagwan Singh marched against them and crushed all of them with iron hand. He also conquered the areas of Kanthi, Ramban, Dangbattal, Pogal, Paristan and Banihal and annexed them to his empire. He established two stone posts, one each at Ramban and Banihal, to mark the boundary limits of Kishtwar State. The stone post at Banihal above the town is still known as "Kishtwar Kain" meaning Kishtwar stone. Kishtwar State became **Greater Kishtwar State**. The Raja established his rule in all the conquered areas



and posted his officers, mostly from the locality to run the administration.

Muslim Raja Kirat Singh ruled over the state from 1664 to 1728 A.D. He appointed one Chamel Singh as commander of the fort of Agasi in Gulabgarh (Dangbattal). The Raja of Rajouri attacked Gulabgarh and besieged the fort. Chamel Singh put up stout resistance for some time but had ultimately to lay down his arms in absence of any reinforcement from the Raja of Kishtwar. However, Chamel Singh was dismissed from service. He fled towards Banihal and started looting and plundering of the area. He took refuge in the upper reaches of Banihal which was named Chamalwas after his name. From there he fled to Warwan area and kept himself busy in fighting against the Mughals of the valley. Raja looked after the conquered areas.

During the reign of Raja Sujjan Singh (1778-81) a chief of Banihal, Karim Baksh, raised a standard of revolt and announced his independence. Raja of Kishtwar himself marched against him with a strong army and killed Karim Baksh in a fierce battle. He constructed a fort at Doda for his winter capital.

In 1781 A.D. Prince Anayat-Ullah Singh was imprisoned by the order of Maharaja Ranjit Dev of Jammu and kept him in Bahu Fort. When this news reached Siraz and Kanthi, some daring young persons reached Jammu in disguise and were able to get Anayat-Ullah Singh freed from the prison. They reached Doda by traveling through unknown places. Lal Dev, the administrator of Kishtwar appointed by Ranjit Dev, was forced to flee. Anayatullah Singh was seated on the throne of his ancestors and crowned as Raja of Kishtwar in 1782 A.D.

The last ruler of Kishtwar, Mohd. Teg Singh, sat on the throne at a very young age. However, his maternal aunt Anwar Dei became the regent and Nand Ram, a Kashmiri Pandit, was appointed as Prime Minister. The other claimants to the throne were Rattan Singh and Anwar Singh, two sons of Raja Gulab Singh of Kishtwar who had ruled the kingdom for forty days only. They entered into a conspiracy against the Raja who had to flee.



to Bhaderwah. Rattan Singh and Anwar Singh occupied the throne but divided their kingdom. Anwar Singh got the areas of Siraz, Kanthi, Ramban, Dangbattal and Banihal whereas Rattan Singh became the Raja of the rest of the empire viz Kishtwar. Anwar Singh made Doda city as his capital. They ruled for only one year. People turned against them because of their misrule. This was an opportune time for Mohd. Teg Singh, who under the able guidance of Nand Ram, entered Doda with a strong force from Bhaderwah. Anwar Singh fled to Kishtwar. Thus, Doda was captured without any resistance. People of Doda came forward for help to Mohd. Teg Singh. Under a plan both Rattan Singh and Anwar Singh were called to Mohalla for settling the dispute and division of the empire. At Mohalla they were first entertained and served with an intoxicating food and then killed by one Mirullah of Uodianpur Doda. Mohd. Teg Singh returned to Kishtwar triumphantly and sat on his ancestral throne. Doda continued to be the winter capital of Raja. During his rule Jalu Rai, a Sardar (chief) of Dangbattal, raised a standard of revolt against the Raja. Mirza Mirulla Beg, the commander of Kishtwar forces, was despatched with a strong force to quell the revolt. Jalu Rai was killed in the battle and the revolt was crushed.

The last ruler Mohd. Teg Singh surrendered before Dogra Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu in 1821 A.D. Thereafter the State became a province of Jammu which was governed by Governors like Chain Singh, Mehta Basti Ram and ultimately Zorawar Singh Kahloria in 1823 A.D. After his martyrdom at Do Yo in Tibet. Jabber Singh became the Governor of Kishtwar.

### **Revolt of Bikram Singh**

The people of Doda and Siraz turned against Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu because he used to play with the honour of the young daughters of Doda people. The Zamindar of Kastigarh, Bikram Singh by name, became furious on hearing all this. He excited the people and also called Dilawar Singh, son of Raja Mohd. Teg Singh of Kishtwar, from Kashmir where he had taken shelter. Diwan Sarab Dayal and Mussadi Padiar, two officers of



Kishtwar stationed in Doda Fort were besieged by the rebels. An old servant of Mohd. Teg Singh, Yassuf Khan by name, joined Bikram Singh. Raja Gulab Singh dispatched one Zorawar Singh son of Wazir Lakhpat with a strong contingent of army to Doda. A fierce battle took place at Doda in which rebels surrendered and Bikram Singh fled away to Kashmir and Dilawar Singh ran away to Trilokpura in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. Nothing was heard about them later on.

The Governor's rule ended in 1872 A.D. In 1977 A.D. Kishtwar province was down graded to the status of a district. In 1909 A.D. It was further down graded and made a tehsil of Udhampur district. Ramban along with Banihal and Doda was made another tehsil of Udhampur district. Thus ended the rule of Kishtwar over Doda, Ramban and Banihal.

On 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2006 Sh. G.N. Azad government conferred district status to Ramban with Ramban and Banihal as its tehsils. It started functioning from 1-4-2007 with Ramban as its headquarter. Besides, other offices a Degree College has also been established at Ramban in 2006.

### **Dialects of Sirazi, Pogali and Rambani**

There are a number of mixed dialects, as per Grierson the Linguist, such as Pogali, Sirazi of Doda and Rambani spoken in the valley of Chenab. Dialects spoken in Pogal in Paristan, Doda and Dessa are considerably nearer to Kishtwari and have no affinity to Kashmiri of Kashmir valley. They are thus dialects of Kishtwari language. It seems that Grierson has not thoroughly studied Kishtwari and dialects spoken in Doda and Ramban. He seems to have been influenced by Kishtwari-Kashmiri spoken in the valley of Kishtwar by Muslims which has a spectacular resemblance with Kashmiri of the Kashmir valley.

### **Pogli**

It is spoken in Pogal and Paristan areas of Banihal and their adjoining areas. Pogali is a dialect of Kishtwari. The mode of

sentence structure, tone and accent is, to a great extent, the same as in Kishtwari. In the hay days of Kishtwar, the kingdom of Greater Kishtwar included Siraz, Doda, Dessa, Ramban, Pogal, Paristan, Banihal and Dangbattal. These areas were ruled and administered by officers from Kishtwar with the help of locals. Watch and Ward posts had been established in that area. The mutual interaction and settlement of some people from Kishtwar in the area brought about a change in the common speech of the Pahari speaking areas who adopted the dialect now spoken in the area. There are number of words in Pogli which astoundingly resemble with Kishtwari whereas some words are spoken in degenerated form. It belongs to Aryan group of languages. It has no affinity with the Kashmiri spoken in Kashmir valley. Kashmiri dialect is spoken by the Muslims in Banihal area.

#### **Sirazi**

In olden days Siraz area, extending from Seighat to Doda, was called Mahabal. The people of this area spoke Sirazi which is a dialect of Kishtwari adjoining to its east side. It is much corrupted and has been influenced by Bhaderwahi and Kashmiri. As such, it can be called a mixed language. It also has resemblance with Rambani spoken to western side.

#### **Rambani**

Rambani is spoken in Ramban tehsil in the valley of Chenab though the left side of river Chenab Dogri has greatly affected the common speech of people living in Batote Niabat. Sirazi is spoken to its east and Pogli to its north. It closely resembles Sirazi. Hence it is also a mixed language.



## Advent of Islam in Kishtwar

Raja Maha Singh probably ruled Kishtwar state between 1650-56 A.D. Till his time there was no Muslim influence in Kishtwar. Maha Singh had two other brothers Abhay Singh and Odhar Singh. Both of them embraced Islam in the court of Mughal emperor Shah Jehan. The Raja of Kishtwar was summoned by the emperor to Mughal court through Hafiz Giasuddin, the Vakil of the Raja of Kishtwar. When Giasuddin failed to persuade the Raja to attend his Mughal Court he was imprisoned. His son Hafiz Abul Qasim, however, personally requested the Raja, who evaded his personal appearance, to send his son prince Jai Singh along with him. On producing the prince in the court the emperor released Giasuddin from the prison and the Raja was pardoned. Prince Jai Singh returned to Kishtwar where a splendid reception awaited him.

### Muslims Allowed to Settle in Kishtwar

Probably under an agreement with Prince Jai Singh and through him Raja Maha Singh Muslims from Kashmir were allowed to settle down in Kishtwar. Accordingly two Kashmiris, Mulla Bhadur and Mulla Hussain sons of Mullah Mahmud Kashmiri were sent to Kishtwar under orders of the emperor Shah Jehan. They constructed a mosque 'Majid Khawaja Garieb' in the heart of Kishtwar town. A chunk of land as Jagir for which 180 Kharwars of seed would require for cultivation and twelve aunnas per day (75 paisa) in cash was granted to them for their maintenance. Till then no Mohammadan had settled in Kishtwar (Shivji Dhar P 38 in Tarikh-i- Kishtwar in Persian and G.M. Ishrat

page 59 in *Tarikh-i-Kishtwar* in Urdu). Thereafter Muslims from Kashmir started coming to Kishtwar.

### **Pressure Exerted on Jai Singh**

In the year 1556 A.D. Jai Singh ascended the throne of Kishtwar state. On the advice of his father Maha Singh he appointed his brother Ram Singh as Prime Minister and Sardar Singh as commander of his forces. Some Muslim families from Kashmir settled around the mosque "Masjid Khawaja Garieb". Thus Muslim population started increasing. The Raja issued an order that no Mohammadan traveller could stay in the town for more than a day. When the news about such an order was received <sup>in</sup> Mughal court, an explanation of the Raja was called for. Jai Singh sent his brother Ram Singh as hostage to the Mughal court and thereby eased the situation for some time. Sardar Singh, the commander of his forces, also fled away stealthily and joined his brother Ram Singh at the Mughal court. He conceived an ill will against the Raja. Both the brothers, Ram Singh and Sardar Singh, hatched a conspiracy against the Raja to get him ousted from the throne and occupy it for themselves. When the Raja learnt about the latest development in the Mughal court he dispatched his son Kirat Singh to the court to present his father's case before the emperor. Prince Kirat Singh, on behalf of his father Raja Jai Singh, promised to change the policy which had antagonised Muslim population of Kishtwar.

### **Shah Farid-ud-Din in Kishtwar**

During the reign of Raja Jai Singh the famous Mohammadan saint Shah Farid-ud-Din Qadiri, popularly known as Shah Sahib, came to Kishtwar from Bagdad via Agra, Delhi and Dangbattal during the reign of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan. Shah Sahib spent some time in Delhi and then proceeded towards Kishtwar, 'in consequence of a dream in which he was told to go and preach there'. He alongwith his four companions, Darvish Mohammad, Syed Baud-Din, Yarn Mohammad and Shah Abdal, traveled via Dangbattal (Gool Gulabgarh), Doda Nagri, Sadan



Van, Thakarie, Bhandarkut and reached Kishtwar. During this travel he married the daughters of Rana Lashkar Rai of Dangbattal and Noor Ali Numberdar of Doda Nagri, a newly converted Muslim. The former was named Mai Roshan Dil and latter Mai Malahat. The Raja of Kishtwar had already acknowledged the suzerainty of the Mughal emperor. He constructed a house for the abode of Shah Sahib near Masjid Khawaja Garib. After about six months Shah Sahib sent for his first wife Mai Zahida Bibi from Delhi and other two wives from Dangbattal and Doda Nagri. Raja Jai Singh had also come under his influence by that time. He adopted a policy of reconciliation towards Muslims in Kishtwar.

Shah Shabib had three sons, Shah Asrar-ud-Din and Shah Anwar-ud-Din from his first wife and Shah Akhiar-ud-Din from Mai Malahat. Shah Asrar-ud-Din lived only for about 18 years whereas Shah Anwar-ud-Din died at the young age of 2½ years only. Shah Asrar-ud-Din was buried near the Chowgan where a tomb was constructed over his grave. It is a famous place for pilgrimage. His death anniversary is celebrated every year on 25<sup>th</sup> Katak (10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> Nov.) with full honour. The tomb attracts thousands of pilgrims from all over the state. Shah Sahib left for his heavenly abode at an advanced age of 99 years and was buried in his house which has become a place of pilgrimage ever since. His death anniversary is celebrated every year on 7<sup>th</sup> Har (20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> June). Thousands of pilgrims pay their respects to this Ziarat on this day. Shah Akhiar-ud-Din lived for about 65 years. During his early days Hafiz Abdul Qasim son of Hafiz Giasud-un-Din, the Wakil of the Raja of Kishtwar in Mughal Court, was appointed as his tutor. Shah Akhir-ud-Din travelled widely including his ancestral home in Bagdad. He died in Kashmir where from his dead body was brought to Kishtwar and buried adjacent to his father's tomb. His death anniversary is celebrated on 7<sup>th</sup> Phalgun (18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> Feb.) every year. Hafiz Abul Qasim who accompanied Shah Sahib to Kishtwar from Delhi under the orders of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan settled at this place.

### **Kirat Singh's Conversion to Islam**

During the rule of Jai Singh Mughal emperor Auragzeb visited



Kashmir only once in 1665 A.D. which kept him away for one year from his capital. All the tributary Rajas had assembled in Srinagar to welcome him. Prince Kirat Singh had been sent by his father Jai Singh to attend the ceremonial function in Srinagar. According to Sukh Dev Singh Charak the Raja of Kishtwar had been summoned to Srinagar and, as such, he deputed Kirat Singh to represent him. Kirat Singh was imprisoned there by the orders of Mughal emperor. Hafiz Abul Qasim who had accompanied the prince intervened and got him released on the condition that he would embrace Islam. The emperor conferred on him the title of Saadat Yar Khan. He was also granted a Khilat. An agreement under the seal and signature of Shah Alamgir (Aurangzeb), Hafiz Abul Qasim and Kirat Singh was made on 25<sup>th</sup> Shawal 1075 Hijri corresponding to 1664 or 1665 AD with the following conditions:-

1. That no tax of any kind will be imposed on Mohammadans.
2. That no person should be molested on embracing Islam.
3. That there will be no hinderance in performing five time prayers, collective prayers or prayers on Friday and Id prayers. All types of facilities will be provided for the construction of mosques.
4. That all the Diwani disputes among Muslims will be settled according to Shara by a Qazi.
5. That no Muslim girl should marry a Kafir.

Hafiz Abul Qasim was appointed Qazi of Kishtwar by the emperor. (Hashmatullah Khan Luckhnovi in *Tarikh-i-Jammu and life History of Maharaj Gulab Singh* page 168.)

### **Uprising in Kishtwar**

On hearing the news of forcible conversion of Kirat Singh to Muslim faith the people of Kishtwar raised a standard of revolt against the Mughals. There was bloodshed, arson, loot and plunder throughout the town and Mandal. Wazir Khawaja Fateh Joo, one of the ministers of the Raja, his family members and some other Muslims were slain. The conspirators, who wanted to usurp the throne were picked up on by one and killed. Hafiz Anayatullah, son of Hafiz Abul Qasim the Qazi of Kishtwar, took shelter in the house of Shah Farid-ud-Din and was saved. All those who took



refuge in that house were spared perhaps due to the reverence the people of Kishtwar had for Shah Sahib.

The Governor of Kashmir sent a strong force to suppress the rebellion and restore peace and order in Kishtwar. Kirat Singh was also sent back to Kishtwar. He helped in bringing back normalcy in the area. However, "Raja Jai Singh could not bear to see his converted son and left for heavenly abode." Shivji Dhar in *Tarikh-i-Kishtwar* page 39.

### **First Muslim Raja of Kishtwar**

Kirat Singh wanted to return back to Hindu fold and was ready to undergo any penance (praschit) but the pandits of the time did not accept it. Thus the Raja adopted Muslim faith and became the first Muslim King of Kishtwar. Many of the servants of Raja viz. Farash (Carpet layers), Naquib (drum beaters), Bazdar (hawk rearers) Chobdar (stable keepers) etc. joined the new faith with the Raja. This had great influence upon the common people who also joined the Muslim faith. However, the Raja used his Hindu name of Kirat Singh instead of Saadat Yar Khan in all his official documents. Prohits were allowed to perform their religious duties as before and the court salutation of "Jai Daiya (Deva)" also continued. He sent his sister Bhup Dei along with his converted younger brother Mian Mohd. Khan to Delhi in the year 1717 A.D. where she became a consort of Mughal emperor Farrukhsiyar (1713-19 A.D.) and was allowed to enter the royal haram. She, however, adhered to the Hindu faith and performed Hindu rituals in her palace (Irvine in *Later Mughals*, English page 360.) the rulers of Kishtwar had retained reverence for their old faith. SDS Chark writes in *History and Culture of Himalayan States Vol. VI part III* page 300-301 that Teg Singh, the last ruling Chief of Kishtwar, though a Mussalman, entertained the service of a prohibit i.e. family priest and even issued a grant of land to him. From the time of Raja Kirat Singh more than five kings ruled Kishtwar. They were all Muslim rajas but continued their Hindu names.

## Distortion in Kishtwar History

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### Sources of Kishtwar History

Erstwhile Kishtwar state was one of the largest states in Divigrit now called Dugar Desh. It has a history of its own. The old record has not come down to the posterity. The only book written in the Kishtwari language was Milindo-Panho- the Questions of King Milind authored by Sage Nagsen in about 2<sup>nd</sup> C B.C. The book throws sufficient light on the life of the people of that time and also on spread of Buddhism. Shivji Dhar, Wazir-i-Wazarat of Kishtwar and Bhaderwah district wrote "Ahwal-i-Mulk-i-Kishtwar" in Persian in 1881 A.D. during the rule of Maharaja Ranbir Singh and was published in 1962 A.D. by the department of Research and Publication J&K Srinagar. One Pt. Dina Nath also wrote manuscript of History of Kishtwar in Hindi in 1885 A.D. which was taken away by Molvi Hashmatulla Khan Lacknowi, Deputy Commisioner Udhampur of which Kishtwar was a tehsil then, in 1915 for incorporating History of Kishtwar in his "Tarikh-i-Jammu and Life History of Maharaja Gulab Singh", which was published in 1936 A.D. Huchison and Vogal, two priests of Chamba, visited Kishtwar in 1920 A.D. and wrote "History of Punjab Hill States" in which Kishtwar history was also recorded. Syed Najam-ud-Din wrote Tarikh-i-Kishtwar and published it after 1920 A.D. Nargis Dass Nargis published his Tarikh-i-Dogra Desh in 1967 A.D. wherein History of Kishtwar was incorporated. In 1973 A.D. Ishrat Kashmiri published Tarikh-i-Kishtwar. Sukh Dev Singh Charak published History and Culture of Himalayan States Vol.VI section V in 1988 A.D. in which he described History of Kishtwar also. Fidda Mohd. Hasnain wrote



Cultural History of Kashmir and Kishtwar and published it in 1962 A.D. D.C Sharma published History and Culture of Kishtwar in 1995 A.D. Wali Mohd. Aseer published Tasvir Zila Doda in 1996 A.D and Kishtwar history formed a part of it. Besides this, foreign travellers like G.T Vigne visited Kishtwar in 1842 A.D. and Fredric Drew travelled throughout Kishtwar in 1870 A.D. Their accounts also gave sufficient material for history writers. Mirza Haider Dauglat invaded Kishtwar in 1547 A.D. and recorded the events in his Tarikh-i-Rashidi. Mughal emperor Jehangir wrote Tuzak-i-Jehangiri which describes the invasion of Dilawar Khan the Governor of Kashmir, over Kishtwar which took place in 1620 A.D. Then there are books on history like Antiquities of Marwa Wardwan by R.C Kak published in 1945 A.D., Shristhal Devi Darshanam by Pt. Hari Lal Jotshi in 1979 A.D. and Jammu Shrines and Pilgrimages by J.N Ganhar, Gulab Nama by Diwan Kripa Ram translated in English by S.D.S Charak in 1977 A.D. Assessment Report of Tehsil Kishtwar by Ram Dhan in 1914 A.D., Rajatarangini by Kalhan in 1148-49 and some other books and scriptures like Rig Ved and Mahabharat.

### **Distortions in History of Kishtwar**

History of Kishtwar has been dealt with extensively in the books on history and other books. Some controversial material, concocted stories and miracles have been recorded in some histories. The history of a place loses its validity if most of the events or facts turn out to be either fabricated, self created or misquoted. It is also a glaring mistake on the part of a history writer if he draws out passages or tracts from poetry, literature or fiction unless these are required for the Chapter "Art and Literature". As a student of history one has to be very cautious in presenting the historical material, compare and contrast it, before considering fit for writing. History writer's main objective should be to present historical material accurately so far as possible. He should not become a preacher or propagator of any faith. What has become a part of literature or fiction cannot be treated as a part of history. History must be based on authentic sources and



reasoning. History writer should not be swayed away by any whim, religious ideology, personal views, fables, miracles, concocted and fabricated stories and events. He should enter the realm of history very carefully and scrupulously. A history writer has a difficult task to write the events of such a place which has been presented in a colourful manner in absence of any historical matter. In the absence of any material about the past history, he has to be very considerate in deducing the facts of events accurately from other sources for presentation.

### **Aryans Were Aborigines**

Fidda Mohd. Hassain writes at page 83 in his authored book *Cultural History of Kishtwar and Kashmir* that Aryans have come down to India from abroad. He writes, "One branch of Aryans crossed over Pameer and entered first Kashgar and then Kashmir. From there they, by a by, made an advance towards middle Himalayan region and after defeating the locals they subjugated Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Garwal, Kumaun and Nepal hills and valleys to establish their colonies. This branch was called Khash whom people consider as Khistriyas. After crossing river Sind they reached Kashmir and Kishtwar. They named both these valleys as Kashmir and Kishtwar respectively". The modern historians have arrived at the conclusion that Aryans were not foreigners. They were the original inhabitants of Panjab, Sind etc. which formed part of ancient India. It is a misnomer to call them outsiders. Prof. Fidda again writes, "For ascertaining the truth about the word Kashtawar which is now called Kishtwar we will have to consider the names of all other places as well which have Kash, Kish, Kush as prefix such as Kish (a district of Iran), Kashgar (city of central Asia), Hindukush (north western ranges). Kash reached Kashmir and Kishtwar after crossing river Sind and named both these valleys as Kashmir and Kishtwar". Kash, Kas or Kessaites had settled in Khashalya from Chingami to Singpur area of the then Rajmandal (Chatru) area of Kishtwar. They were akin to Sanskrit as stated by the linguist Grierson. Kalhana, the author of *Rajatarangini* also writes about Khashas of



Khashalya and Thakurs of Chandrabhaga, both Khistriyas who had settled much before the advent of Kahan Pal, the first historical king of Kishtwar, on the scene. The name of Kishtwar emerged after the name of 'Cheerhar' to this area in about 10<sup>th</sup> C A.D. after Kahan Pal had consolidated his power. Aryans had penetrated in this area much earlier than other clans. How the author of Cultural History of Kishtwar and Kashmir had arrived at the conclusion that Kash gave the name of Kishtwar to this valley or Kashmir to the next valley is beyond comprehension.

According to Nilmat Puran Vol. I page 74 translated by Dr. Ved Kumari in 1988, which may have been composed in 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> C A.D., Khasas as per Markandeya Puran has been described as a mountainous tribe and Mahabharata Sabhaparva 52/2/3 places them near the river Sailoda between the Meru and Mandara mountains who had settled on the high reaches of the Himalayas. At that time there was no country with Kishtwar as its name. Kishtwar name emerged in about 10<sup>th</sup> C A.D. However, the name Kashmir has its origin much earlier than Kishtwar. Thus it is baseless and misleading to write that Khasas gave the name of Kishtwar to this valley and Kashmir to the valley next to it.

### **Khan Pal's Ancestry from Gaur Bengal**

About Kahan Pal, who established his rule in Kishtwar, Prof. Fidda writes at page 110 in his book Cultural History of Kishtwar and Kashmir, "Some (historians) have connected the pedigrees of the rulers with the Ghores of Bengal. It was customary with the Hindu rulers to connect their ancestry with some famous king of India. In this manipulation the Brahman Courtiers would indulge to please their masters by completing false genealogical tables. Infact none of the earlier rulers (of Kishtwar) had any connection with Malwa or Bengal". He has, however, not quoted any example except that of Kahan Pal. He has been grossly misled by his own contention as Kahan Pal's ancestors, the Palas of Northern Bengal, the capital of which was Gaur near Murshidabad now in Bangladesh, had reality and originality. Kahan Pal's forefather



had fled away from Gaur Bengal in about 870 A.D when Raja Bhoj I (836 – 90), the Pratihara king of Avanti (Malwa), the capital of which was Ujjaini, invaded Gaur Bengal and inflicted a crushing defeat upon Vigrapala the then ruler of Gaur Bengal. "Shorn of its plume, the Pala Empire now lay tottered," writes B.N. Puri in 'The History of Gurjara – Pratihara' Page 64. Kahan Pal with his forefathers may have lived in Ujjaini, the seat of administration of their over lord, for some time and then found an opportune time to march towards Chander Bhaga zone with a band of his followers when Pratihara dynasty's decline was evident. Other historians, too, have been misled in establishing the truth about the connection of Malwa or Ujjaini with Gaur Bengal.

Hashmatullah, Najamuddin and Shivji Dhar have also connected the ancestry of Kahan Pal with Gaur Bengal, a taluqa (estate) of Ujjain. They, however, write that Kahan Pal's forefather Haripal and son of Raja Bhoj whose father was Raja Bikramaditya of Ujjain which cannot be established as correct. Ishrat Kashmiri has written that Kahan Pal was the successor of Harsha Vikramaditya of Ujjain and refutes the claim of other historians that Kahan Pal belonged to solar race of Gaur Bengal. Since Kahan Pal established his kingdom at Kishtwar in about 10<sup>th</sup> C.A.D. the question of being successor of any Vikramajit or Vikrama Datt does not arise as they ruled Malwa or Ujjaini in between 375 – 413 A.D. Taluqa does not mean only a 'part of' but also 'domination of'. Thus Ujjaini was Taluqa of Bengal as the king of Malwa of which Ujjain was the capital had dominated the Palas of Bengal and brought them under their subjugation as discussed above. In revenue records of Kishtwar Kahan Pal's dynasty has been shown as Gauria Rajputs which establishes the truth that Kahan Pal's ancestry belonged to Gaur Bengal and not Ujjain.

#### **Agar Dev and Ugar Sanz not One Personality**

Aseer Kishtwari writes at page 128 in "Tasveer-e-Zila Doda" that Agar Dev of Kishtwar fled away from Kishtwar when his



cousin Bolder Dev revolted against him and settled at Rupwan in Kashmir. Thus he agrees with the concocted story of Syed Najamuddin described at page 17 in *Tarikh-i-Kishtwar* that Agar Dev or Ugar Tez fled away from Kishtwar and got a Jagir at Rupwan. He further writes that Sheikh Noor-ud-Din was the seventh descendent of Ugar Tez or Ugar Sanz. Infact Agar Dev and Ugar Sanz or Ugar Tez are two different personalities. The former was the Raja of Kishtwar who ruled for a long time and the latter hailed from the Ganie (Ganwai – a Hindu clan) family of Usdhar about nine kilometres from Kishtwar town in Trigam Pragana. The residents of Usdhar village had adopted the surname of 'Resh' after the name of Nund Rishi or Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Wali. Ishrat Kashmiri writes at page 132 in his book *Tarikh-e-Kishtwar* that Sheikh Noor-ud-Din's ancestors hailed from Usdhar. Abdul Qayum Rafiqui, the author of "Suffism in Kashmir", writes at page 137 that Sheikh Noor-ud-Din's father Salar Ganie belonged to the tribe of a watchman. This corroborates the fact that Ugar Sanz or Ugar Tez hailed from Usdhar and had no linkage with the Royal family of Kishtwar. The relatives of Ugar Sanz are still living at Usdhar and suffix 'Resh' with their names after the name of Nund Rishi. Some are still called Ganie.

### **Truth About Chak Invasion of Kishtwar**

Nargis Dass Nargis, Ishrat Kashmiri, Syed Najamuddin supported by Aseer Kishtwari have written that Raja Bhadur Singh of Kishtwar was defeated by Ali Shah Chak, ruler of Kashmir, in 1572 A.D. He agreed to give his sister Shanker Dei in marriage to Yaqub Shah Chak, Grand son of Ali Shah Chak and son of Yusuf Shah Chak. In 1574 A.D. Ali Shah Chak defeated the Raja of Kishtwar for the second time. This time he agreed to send his son Narayan Singh as hostage and his daughter, who later on became known as Fateh Khatoon, in marriage to Ali Shah Chak. Now see the irony of these two events about which the reality has been set aside. Raja Bhadur Singh who was only seven years old survived the attack on his family at Badhat, a Pargana of Kishtwar, and spent two years in hiding in the house



of his foster mother. He was ultimately installed on the throne of Kishtwar at the age of 11 which almost all the history writers agree. Ali Shah invaded Kishtwar in 1572 when Raja was eleven years old and again in 1574 when he had turned up thirteen years old. How is it possible that the Raja had son and daughter at this young age is a matter to be taken into account. Moreover, when all the members of his family had been murdered at Badhat wherefrom his sister Shanker Dei by name came, is also a matter of inquisition. Does logic, common sense, social customs and research approve of such fabricated version of events. Shanker Dei was actually daughter of Raja's foster mother whose breast he had sucked in childhood. Fateh Khatoon was the daughter of some noble or one of his relations. Raja, however, could not have any son having Narayan Singh as his name at the young age. All these are concocted stories having no truth.

Some historians like Syed Najamuddin, Molvi Hashmatullah and Shivji Dhar write that Yaqub Shah Chak, husband of Shanker Dei, died in Kishtwar and was buried at Sarkut. This has been refuted by Ishrat Kashmiri, Aseer Kishtwari and D.C. Sharma. The grave said to be that of Yaqub Shah Chak is the grave of a Fakir (which is situated at a place known as Faqir Bagh near Sarkut Village). Infact Yaqub Shah was sent to Bihar by Mughal emperor Akbar and put to the care of Raja Man Singh. There he joined his father Yusuf Shah who had been given a mansab (rank) of 500 horse. It was there that he was given a poisoned betel leaf which became the cause of his death. His body was buried at Biwak in Bihar.

### **Reality about Mughal Invasion of Kishtwar**

Aseer Kishtwari, writes at page 142 that there was no Mughal invasion on Kishtwar in 1606 A.D. and there was no Governor of Kashmir with the name of Mirza Ali Akber at that time. This is also incorrect. PNK Bamzai writes at page 387 in History of Kashmir that Mirza Ali Akber was Governor of Kashmir from 1601 to 1606. This was first invasion on Kishtwar during the reign of Mughal Emperor Jehangir.



Shivji Dhar, Hashmat Ullah and Syed Najam-ud-Din have described the invasion of Governor of Kashmir on Kishtwar in a colourful manner. They are all of one opinion that the invasion of 1622 A.D. was the invasion of Mughlani Begum. Infact she was a widow of Mohd. Khan or Nasarullah Arab or some other noble who is known as Mughlani Begum. It is said and written by Hashmatullah "She was asked to rule over Kishtwar and avenge the murder of her husband. So she took a vow that the clay of Kishtwar would be thrown into the river Chander Bhaga and thereby avenge the murder of her husband. She entered Kishtwar with ten thousand soldiers. On the insistence and request of nobles of Kishtwar she agreed to dig a pond near the grave of Yaqub Shah and named it as Sarkut". This does not appear to be the factual position. However, this event has not been mentioned in Tuzak-i-Jehangiri. Moreover, there seems repetition of the invasion of 1620 and 1622 respectively. According to Tuzak-i-Jehangiri only 200 soldiers entered Kishtwar who caught hold of Raja Gaur Singh and imprisoned him. Dilawar Khan was governor of Kashmir at that time who had been ordered to reduce Kishtwar. Neither there was any grave of Yaqub Shah at Sarkut nor any pond of this name was dug by Mughal Forces. Had it actually been dug by Mughal forces the name of the place would have been kept after Mughalani's name. If ten thousand soldiers, as described by Hashmatullah, would have taken one handful of clay from the pond a large pond would have come into existence is a matter to be deliberated upon. Even if ten thousand kilgograms would have been thrown into the river by ten thousand soldiers it would mean only 100 quintals of clay which is not in conformity with the reality. Even ten thousand truck load of clay would not fill in the pond at this time. This is a fable and cannot be agreed upon. Ishrat Kashmir, D.C. Sharma and some other history writers do not agree with it. Sarkut infact was the degenerated form of Shrikut, the name of the place kept after the name of Shripal, the saint. Shrikut means 'The abode of Shripal'. Since Sar in Kishtwari means a Pond and Kut means 'a dwelling place' the name Shrikut was appropriate. When a pond was dug at this place long after

for storing water for animals to overcome the shortage of water, it was named Sarkut after the name of the place which, with the passage of time, had been degenerated from Shrikut to Sarkut.

Likewise Bhandarkut Fort was existing when Dilawar Khan's forces reached there. They only used this fort as also supported by Shivji Dhar and others. Syed Najamuddin has written at page 26 of his book that 10,000 force remained stationed at Bringi Bagh for fourteen years whereas it was stationed there only for four months and ten days as per Tuzak-i-Jehangiri which cannot be incorrect. It is also astonishing how this force was fed during those days when population of Kishtwar was scanty. Ishrat Kashmiri and D.C. Sharma have not accepted it. This is distortion of facts.

#### Identification of Nant Dev of Dachhan

R.C. Kak in his *Antiquities of Marwa and Wardwan* page 25 writes "Nant Deva mentioned in the inscription found near Sirshi in Dachhan Pargana in Sarda script was most probably king Ananta of Kashmir who reigned from 1028-1063 A.D. So Kishtwar, of which Dachhan forms a small part, must have formed part of the kingdom of Kashmir before his accession to the throne for Kalhana recording his conquest of Champa and Vallapura (modern Chamba and Ballaur) does not make any mention of it. He could not have marched into Chamba without having previous possession of Kashtawar and Padar, which lies on the direct route to it. If my identification of Nant Deva with Ananta Deva is correct, the date Samvat 12 corresponds with Vikrama year 1112 (1055 A.D.)". This has been supported by Asfer Kishrwar and Dr. P.K. Koul. This view cannot, however, be accepted on the following grounds.

1. There is no mention of Kishtwar having been under any king of Kashmir including that of King Ananta in any history book on Kashmir. Kalhana and PNK Bamzai are also silent about it in *Rajatarangini* and *History of Kashmir* respectively.



2. The route via Margan Pass to Kishtwar was not known to Kashmir Kings at the time when king Ananta ruled over Kashmir. There is no mention of Marwa and Dachhan in any history on Kashmir. So this route could not have been used.
3. Nant Deva must have been a local chief of Dachhan at that time as the boundaries of Kishtwar kingdom had not been extended to Dachhan. Marwa was a separate principality ruled by the successors of Deep Sen son of Kahan Pal the King of Kishtwar. Dachhan was not a part either of Marwa or Kishtwar kingdom at that time.
4. There is a vast difference in the names of Nanta Deva and Ananta. Kashmir Kings had not suffix of 'Deva'. The name of kings were Parvagupta, Abhimanyu, Bhimagupta, Hariraja, Ananta, Kalsa, Harshraja, Uccla etc. However, Kishtwar Kings had adopted the suffix 'Deva' instead of 'Sena' by Oudat Dev and his followers.
5. There is no sense and truth in conquering Dachhan, Kishtwar and Paddar prior to the conquest of Champa and Vallapura. The route to conquer these two places was Banihal route which was shortest, easiest and well known to Kashmir Kings. Kishtwar was ruled by independent kings right from 10<sup>th</sup> C.A.D. when the first historical King Kahan Pal established his rule over this place.
6. Sharda script remained in use during that period and the person who inscribed it on the stone near Sirshi in Sharda characters must have been conversant with this script. This does not establish the fact that Dachhan was under the king of Kashmir. Only some people used to go to Kashmir for learning Sharda script and language. Thus we cannot agree with R.C. Kak's version. Geographically also we arrive at the conclusion that the route via Marwa was not known to Kashmir Kings at that time and was not possible for journey.



### **The First Muslim Raja of Kishtwar**

The first converted Raja of Kishtwar was Kirat Singh and not his father Jai Singh, as described by Syed Najamuddin, Hashmatullah and supported by Ascer Kishtwari in their authored histories on Kishtwar. It is not based on facts as narrated by the earliest historians. Fredric Drew writes in *Jammu and Kashmir Territories* at page 120, "After this first Mohammadan Raja (whose change of religion determined the faith of all succeeding Rajas) came Raja Amlok Singh". Amlok Singh was the son of Kirat Singh – the first Raja referred to by him. Ishrat Kashmiri, Hachison and Vogel, Najam-ud-Din and other historians also do not agree with the version. Shivji Dhar Dhar writes at page 78 in *Tarikh-i-Kishtwar* that Raja Jai Singh Could not tolerate to see the face of his son and prince Kirat Singh on his return from Kashmir, where he had gone to attend the welcome ceremony of the emperor Aurangzeb in 1664 A.D., as he had become a Mohammadan and closed his eyes for ever. How can such a Raja become a Mohammadan who preferred to die than to see the face of his converted son. Thus the fact has been concocted and distorted. In fact Kirat Singh was the first Mohammadan Raja of Kishtwar.

### **Islam in Kishtwar**

Ascer Kishtwari writes at page 151 of his book "Tasveer-e-Zila Doda" that Muslims had settled at Kishtwar during the region of Maha Singh, father of Jai Singh, and under an agreement Muslims from Kashmir were allowed to settle in Kishtwar. Mullah Bhadur and Mullah Hussain, both sons of Mullah Mohd. Kashmiri, came to Kishtwar and settled at this place during his rule. Molvi Harshmatullah writes at page 164 in his book "During Maha Singh's Rule (Maha Singh alias Maha Jahan) there was prosperity in the state (Kishtwar) and the population of Kishtwar town multiplied. Till then there was no Muslim population in this country". During the rule of Raja Jai Singh, son and successor of Maha Singh, the stay of Muslims from Kashmir for more than a



day was banned which has been agreed upon by historians like Isharat Kashmiri and others.

Some Muslims, however, had been living at Kishtwar. How did large number of Muslims settled in Kishtwar prior to 1664 since when Jai Singh became the Raja of Kishtwar is a matter of astonishment. It is clear that Kirat Singh was converted to Islam under the orders of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb during his first and last visit of Kashmir in 1663 or 1664 A.D. where prince Kirat Singh had also been sent by his father Raja Jai Singh to participate in the welcome ceremony of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. Some history writers say that Kirat Singh was converted to Islam in 1687 AD whereas Aurangzeb spent about 25 ears of his reign from 1682 to 1707 AD in the Deccan where he remained engaged in wars against the rulers of that region. As such, this cannot be agreed upon as true. He proceeded in person to the Decan. In January 1687 he proceeded for the conquest of Golcanda and conquered it in September 1687 A.D. Thus it is quite clear that there was no Muslim population in Kishtwar till Maha Jahan's rule and Kirat Singh was converted in Srinagar in 1663-64 A.D.

### **Concocted Stories in Kishtwar Histories**

Syed Nagam-ud-Din, Shivji Dhar and Asseer Kishtwari write at page 31, 36 and 148 in their books respectively that the Governor of Kashmir, under orders of Mughal emperor, dispatched an army of 1200 strong soldiers with prince Bhagwan Singh to reoccupy his ancestral throne from the clutches of Wazir Kantak Ballouria. Hashmatullah talks of only one thousand soldiers. Population of Kishtwar at that time was only 4000. People of Kishtwar had already risen in revolt against Wazir Kantak. So there was no need of sending such a huge army which had to be fed at the expense of Kishtwar Raja. This cannot, as such, be taken as true. However, sending of soldiers from Kashmir stands justified.

Another story has been concocted by Syed Najam-ud-Din in *Tarikh-i-Kishtwar* at page 33 that Mughal emperor Shah Jehan gave his daughter in marriage to Shah Farid-ud-Din Bagdadi and at page 39 he further writes that the population of Kishtwar at that time was only about 4000. The Mughal emperor had sent 4000 soldiers with Shah Farid-ud-Din who settled at Kishtwar. This has not been supported by Ishrat Kashmiri who writes at page 66 in his book *History of Kishtwar*, "It is not possible that the son-in-law of emperor of India will come to Kishtwar and the Raja of the place will not be moved at all. The population of Kishtwar would have been more than 40,000 at present if 4000 had accompanied Shah Sahib. All of them would have been Muslims." It all looks fantastic. The present scenario of Kishtwar does not have any conformity with it. It was customary for Mughal emperors that they would not marry their daughters as described by historians and authorities on Mughal histories. As such, this, too, cannot be agreed upon as true.

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## Socio-Cultural History of Kishtwar

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Erstwhile Kishtwar state was one of the eleven states that existed in Divigrit – the country of two hollows. It was called Lohit Mandal during Mahabharata time. From the hoary past it played a very significant role in shaping the destiny of its adjoining states. It has now been established that some parts of Rig Veda were compiled in Warwan Pargana of Kishtwar where Rishis (sages) lived in seclusion and compiled the hymns of Rig Veda. The abode of Rishis was then called Rishinivas which is presently a village known as Rikinvass in Warwan pargana. This has taken the inhabitation in this land to a distant past. The old remnants strewn all over Marwa and Warwan have provided us sufficient material for bringing out past from obscurity. Many civilizations flourished in this erstwhile state which brought name and fame to it. It is a misfortune that no record of the ancient events was maintained since the art of writing history was an unknown fact. Even Kalhana, the renowned historian and the author of Rajataranjini, has not mentioned the name of these parganas not to speak of great events that took place in this land. Perhaps he had no knowledge of his neighbouring state. Otherwise how this great fact of compiling some parts of Vedas at Rikinvass would have escaped his sharp eye. It is a matter of great astonishment. Kashmiri rulers and people of the valley had neither any political, social or cultural links with this part of Kishtwar state during those days, ~~during~~.

## **Cultural Heritage**

People living in ancient Kishtwar worshipped their Lord in the open. They worshipped trees, rivers, stones, snakes, springs and other natural objects which, according to them, were possessed with great strength. In Marwa and Warwan areas we have found a large number of icons, big and small, scattered all over which substantiate that people worshipped Shiva also. R.C. Kak in his book entitled "Antiquities of Marev-Wardwan" writes at page 25 "Bathastal cave is situated about a mile from Suid in Dachhan pargana of Kishtwar. There is a long spacious chamber inside the cave. A large number of characters in Brahmi script have been found on the ceiling of this cave which dates back to 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. The serene and mystical atmosphere of the cave might have allured the ancient Rishis to sit inside for meditation". Further he writes "At Zaji Nai in Wardan pargana there is an inscription in Sanskrit carved on a rough river boulder. The phrases as 'Asvapadam pratishtha pitam asvagn raksha' were engraved on it. The inscription commemorates the erection of a stable for the protection of horses and cattle which were sent to pastures for grazing." This shows that Sanskrit was in vogue in that area in the past.

Ruins of temples at Saiya Draman in Nagseni pargana of Kishtwar reveal the tales of ancient culture and architectural heights reached by the people. The temples built all in stones with Sharda, Kharoshti or Kishtwari and unknown scripts on the blocks of stones used in the walls of temples divulge that the people of this pargana were literally and culturally far advanced. The art of sculpture, architecture, wood carving and relief work on blocks of stones and doors of temples at various other places in Kishtwar further give an insight into the style of carving and engraving especially at Kaikut temple in Dachhan, Dhensher Nag temple in Durbeel and Bimal Nag temple in Saroor parganas of Kishtwar. An image of Nandi (Shiva's bull) at Leondi Paddar, Sculptured from hard sand stone, with all physical features and contours, prominently standing in front of Shiva temple, is an excellent



piece of indigenous stone art of ancient paddar pargana of Kishtwar.

Village Bhattan in Nagseni pargana, about 6 to 8 Kms from Saiya Draman, has remained a seat of Buddhist learning. It was "Wattaniya Ashram" of Buddhist monks in about 2nd century B.C. when Nagsen, the heir apparant to the throne of Nagseni, embraced Buddhism and wandered from place to place for its propagation. Assagutt, sipiritual head of Buddhists, lived there in the Ashram at that time. Nagsen defeated king Manander of Sialkot (Sagal), now in Pakistan, in a philosophical discourse. The king embraced Buddhism and became king Milind of Buddhist literature. The outcome was the compilation of a treatise. "Milindo Panho" or Questions of King Milind. The book was written in a dialogue form in Pali language perhaps in Kishtwari script which may have been in vogue at that time.

Near Bhattan village below Damzi village an Ashok Chakra made of about 2 feet diameter stone wheel with 24 spokes carved on it and a hole in the centre has been found alongwith an image of Buddha. This craftsmanship and sculptural art dates back to 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C when Nagsen became a Buddhist saint. Besides, a flight of stairs made of chiselled stones found at this place are a sufficient proof that a spacious hall existed on the ground nearby where Assaguth convened Buddhist conferences. The megalith of three metres in height, situated at village Pochhal some three Km from Kishtwar town, seems to belong to Ashokan period when Buddhisms was at the zenith of its glory. It seems that the capital on the pillar, inscribed with some edicts issued by king Ashok, for which a shaft of 60 cms in length has been found carved on the top of the megalith, could not have been fixed and the task remained unaccomplished due to some unknown reasons.

The stone gateway at Agral in Sarthal pargana of Kishtwar, the old site of Ashtadashbhuja Deviji's temple, built during the reign of Raja Agar Dev of Kishtwar, probably in 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D is a magnificent piece of craftsmanship. Idols in temples,



pillars, megaliths, stone fountains called "Noan" in Kishtwari scattered at different places all over Kishtwar give us yet some more glimpses of art, architecture and sculpture of ancient Kishtwar. At a much later stage after 17<sup>th</sup> C.A.D. a mixed type of art, architectural works emerged due to the influx of Muslims from Kashmir and conversion of Hindus. Examples of these are lattice work on doors, windows and ventilators, carved wooden pieces affixed in the ceiling of various mansions and houses which are very attractive, charming and marvellous. All this shows that people had attained mastery in the realm of fine arts, architecture and sculpture.

### **Language**

Kishtwar is the land of harmonious culture and variety of spoken languages and dialects. Socially, culturally, linguistically and ethnically it may not be a homogenous unit but both educated and uneducated speak the same language. In ancient Kishtwar Sanskrit was the literary language but spoken language was Pali—a simpler language than Sanskrit. Many words spoken by common man in Kishtwar resemble with Sanskrit words. Kashmiri dialect is spoken by Muslims of Kishtwar since 17<sup>th</sup> century. Both Kishtwari and Kashmiri belong to Aryan-group of languages. They have common origin – Prakrit and are thus sister languages. Before 17<sup>th</sup> century when some Muslim families migrated to Kishtwar only Hindus lived in this land. It has a script of its own. George Grierson, the linguist, has given a list of words of Kishtwari script in *Linguistic Survey of India* Vol. VIII part II page 234 shown elsewhere in this book. The present form of spoken Kishtwari is the direct outcome of Prakrit, Pali or Sanskrit. In fact almost all words of pure old Kishtwari were Sanskrit words, some in degenerated form, whereas some others, very surprisingly, in true form. Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* is full of references of Khasa tribe living in Chingan and Singpur parganas of Kishtwar just bordering Kashmir Valley, who spoke a language closely allied to Sanskrit. Due to lack of royal patronage this language could not develop its literature in written form. The only book



written in the then Pali language in Kishtwari script was Milindopanho authored by sage Nagsen. It was considered Kishtwari language by the scholars. However, the original manuscript having been lost only its translations in various languages are available. Some historians opine that Takri script, closely allied to Sharda script of Kashmir, was in vogue in Kishtwar during medieval period.

### Original Inhabitants of Kishtwar

We have no authentic record about the original inhabitants of Kishtwar because of its antiquity. Probably Nagas, hailing from north-eastern part of India, were the first to penetrate and settle in Kishtwar. They worshipped 'Nags' or serpents or snakes. Even at present 'Nag' suffix is found with the names of springs namely Godrashnag, Mulnag, Damernag, Ghumainag, Bimalnag, Bimarnag etc. Worshippers of 'Nags' are found in Padder, Nagseni and Saroor parganas of Kishtwar even at present. This cult seems to have been predominant throughout Paddar as the doors of Temples in every village have 'Nag' or snake images carved on them.

Aryans were next to infiltrate and settle in this valley. Some parts of Rig Ved were compiled by Rishis during that period. In the tenth book Nadisukhta 75/5 of Rig Ved there is a hymn in praise of rivers wherein the names of Asikini and Marud Vridha have been mentioned. Asikini is Chandra Bhaga (Chenab) and Marud Vridha the present Mariev Sudher or Marwa river. Thus Aryans seem to have settled in Kishtwar valley thousands of years ago, Rotars, Ganwais and Panjsansis were among the earliest inhabitants to come to this region and settle there. Presently their families were scattered here and there in Kishtwar.

Another tribe which settled in this region along the border of Kashmir valley was Khasa tribe. It was a peace loving tribe who hailed from Saloda situated in between Meru and Mundra hills of Himalayan belt. Gauria Brahmins, Barwalas and Rajputs accompanied Kahan Pal of Gour Bengal, the first historical king



of Kishtwar and settled in this land. Kashmiri Muslims and few Pandit families migrated to this place for refuge and settled in this land after 17<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Gujjars from Gurjaradesha in Rajasthan and Malwa were the last to come and settled in this land after 17<sup>th</sup> century AD.

In about 1664 A.D. Raja Kirat Singh, heir apparent to the throne of Kishtwar, was converted to Islam in Srinagar during the first and last visit of Mughal emperor of India Aurangzeb to the valley but the rulers thereafter preferred to be called by Hindu names instead of Muslim name of 'Khan'. The last ruler of Kishtwar had three sons namely Jaimal Singh, Zorawar Singh and Dilawar Singh. The way of salutation in their darbar did not change and the royal priests continued to perform religious functions although the Rajas offered five time prayers according to Muslim faith. Sarthal Yatra was not stopped. In the beginning of the rule by Gauria Kings Sanskrit was the court language which was subsequently followed by Hindi, Persian, Dogri and last of all by Urdu languages with the passage of time.

Thus the cultural history of Kishtwar developed in ancient and medieval periods. All the outside settlers adopted the same dress, diet and way of life and contributed to the same culture known as Kishtwari culture. This culture developed intrinsic qualities of harmony and synthesis and maintained its individuality in spite of many ups and downs. Kishtwar was able to preserve its individuality and identity. Thus it has bequeathed to the posterity a secular outlook hundreds of years ago when people of other cultures did not have even a faint idea about this belief. Both Hindus and Muslims lived together. Fundamentalism and communalism had no place in the society. People lived peacefully and.

### **Dress and Diet of People**

The dress and diet of the people of Kishtwar was an admixture of Dogri and Pahari cultures. It was different from Kashmiri people. The dress included Kurta (shirt), Pyjama (trousers), Kantop (cap covering head and ears), Dupatta (head



gear), Coat, Grass shoes, Leather shoes etc. In olden days when sewing machines were not available people used to wear a hand sewen loose type of garment made of Pattu (woolen cloth) with a girdle of the same cloth throughout the year. Only few people of some consequence together with the king and his courtiers wore both cotton and woollen clothes during summer and winter seasons respectively. In Tuzak-i-Jahangiri translated by Alexander Rogers, Mughal emperor Jahangir himself gives an account of Kishtwar at page 140 some time in 1620 A.D. About Raja of Kishtwar he writes, "He is not wanting in dignity. His dress is after the Indian fashion and he knows both Hindi and Kashmiri (Kishtwari) languages. (Kashmiri was not spoken in Kishtwar at that time.) Contrary to other zamindars of those regions he looked like the inhabitant of a town". Since the dawn of independence and moreso after the construction of motorable roads, linking Kishtwar with other places and towns, things have undergone a great change. Now people put on both cotton and woollen clothes properly sewen by tailors. These include pant, coat and shirt for gents and kamiz, shalwar dupatta and in some cases blouse and sari for ladies. Moreover, lady shoes, sandals, canvas shoes, plastic shoes and chapals are also worn by both men and women. Ladies wear gold and silver ornaments according to their status. These include necklace, bracelets, ear rings, ring etc.

The eatables of the people of Kishtwar in olden days included wheat, barley, maize, pulses and vegetables grown locally. In remote areas and heigher reaches people used forest products such as mushrooms, kisroor etc. People were economically very backward and poverty stricken in comparison to present day position. At some places paddy was also grown and rice included as their staple food. People were very fond of apricot widely grown which formed their principal fruit. Besides, wild grapes, peaches quince, apples, walnuts, pears, pomegranates were also liberally taken by the people as fruit. Jahangir, Mughal emperor of India, writes "In Kishtwar there are produced much wheat, barely, lentils, millets and pulses. Differing from Kashmir it produces little rice. Its saffron is finer than that of Kashmir.



People also used Ghee (clarified butter) honey, whey and milk. Agriculture was the main occupation of the people”.

### **Status of Women**

From times immemorial erstwhile Kishtwar state remained cut off from other places as there were no roads and direct routes. This badly told upon the living standard of the people who could not better their lives. Due to lack of education women folk were mostly confined to their household activities. However, they were held in high esteem and considered very important in all walks of life. Their participation in social, cultural and religious functions and rituals was very essential. Some of the women made a mark in the society by their valour, good work and ability. In Kishtwar history the name of one Kokila Devi (Koki Devi) who was mainly responsible for the defeat of Mughal forces near Mugal Maidan then called Mughal Mazar or Burial place of Mughals, is prominently given a proper place in the history of Kishtwar. She is admired by local people of Kuleed and other villages in Kishtwar for her heroic task even upto now. Shanker Dei popularly known as Shanker Maji (mother Shankar), hailing from Ganwai family of Kishtwar, who was married to Yaqub Shah Chak the exiled king of Kashmir in about 1572 A.D., is highly respected and remembered by the people for her outstanding social welfare works through her own resources in the memory of her deceased husband. She got constructed a water course from Lahala stream to Zewer village and another from Godrashag to Drangwaji pond near Nilkanth Mahadev temple in the main bazaar of Kishtwar town to mitigate the sufferings of people arisen out of water crisis. Fateh Khatoon was another woman from a noble family of Kishtwar, who was married to Ali Shah Chak, grand father of Yaqub Shah Chak and became famous in his court.

Then came Vilas Maji, a diplomat queen of Raja Mehar Singh, in whom the Raja had vested with all the powers of administration. Bhup Dei, sister of Raja Kirat Singh, on the command of Mughal emperor was sent to Mughal court in



1717 A.D. She entered Royal haram of emperor Farrukhsiyar but did not change her religion. According to Irvine in *Later Mughals* English version page 360, she was responsible for many scandals in the royal court which ultimately became the chief reason that the emperor was deposed and murdered. Anwar Dei sister of Raja Anayatullah Singh and widow of one Yusaf Khan, who became regent of the infant king Mohd. Teg Singh ruled the state for 12 years efficiently and vigorously. She was a brave woman whose capability kept the state intact.

Krishna Mehta, sister of Om Mehta, former State Home Minister of India and wife of Mehta Duni Chand, who laid down his life as Deputy Commissioner Muzaffarabad when raiders from Pakistan attacked J&K State in 1947, was another great woman of Kishtwar. She was brought back to India along with her sons and daughters from Pakistan where she had been taken as a refugee from Muzaffarabad. She worked for the welfare of people. She was nominated as Member Parliament (M.P.) and represented J&K state. She founded Gandhi Seva Sadan Jammu, Khadi Gram Udyog Sang Allahabad and Himpuri Gandhi Seva Sadan Kishtwar. She was a great daughter of the soil. At present the status of women has risen highly because of educational advancement, occupation of higher posts and social status. They also excel in fine arts.

### **Fairs and Festivals**

Kishtwaris have their peculiar type of fairs, festivals, tihars or melas. These fairs and festivals have historical, social and seasonal background. These are the pastimes and gala days for the people who after getting free from toil of harvesting life to enjoy themselves by making merry. These fairs and melas are held at various places on different fixed days where folk dance and folk music entertain the public. Before 1947 A.D. these were part and parcel of the life of Kishtwaris. They invited their friends, kith and kin to feasting. Processions were taken out and days celebrated with fervour and gaiety. At times 'Yajnas' and 'Hawans' were also performed. Some of these fairs and festivals



are still observed such as 'Samsar' (first day of the new year according to lunar year), Ramnavmi, Bisou (Baisakhi), Urs Shah Farid-ud-Din, Bhot Turo (offering to a meta physical being), Phalgun Purnima (now Lohri), Gori Tritiya, Nine day Tihars in the month of Phalgun and Halwanzan Bah (12<sup>th</sup> bright moon of Phalgun). Besides, National festivals such as Janam Ashtami, Id-ul-Fitr, Diwali, Dussehra, Id-ul-Zuha, Lohri, Id Milad-ul-Nabi, 15<sup>th</sup> August (Independence Day), Republic Day, Shab-i-Barat and Shab-i-Miraj are also celebrated.

## LITERATURE AND FINE ARTS

### Sanskrit Literature

Kishtwar had been a dwelling place of fine arts and literature from hoary times. Some hymns of Rig Ved had been compiled by Rishis (sages) in Warwan pargana of Kishtwar. In about 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC Sage Nagsen wrote Milando Panho — Questions of King Milind, in a dialogue form in Pali language in Kishtwari script, which was probably the spoken language in Kishtwar during that period and in fact was simpler than Sanskrit. Characters in Brahmi, Kharoshti, Kishtwari Sharda and Sanskrit in Devnagari scripts and have been found on the ceiling of Bathastal cave in Dachhan, Stone Boulder at Zajnai in Warwan and Stone Temple walls at Saiya Draman Nagseni respectively. This shows that people were conversant with these scripts in olden days. Most probably the earliest Sanskrit literature and Rig Ved were written in these scripts. During the reign of Raja Narinder Sen in about 11<sup>th</sup> C.A.D. a book on topography and another on astrology were written in Sanskrit. The manuscripts of these books were taken away by some scholars for publication but have been lost. During that period one Shree Vak composed a book on music "Sangeet Sangrah" in Sanskrit language. Raja Maha Singh was a versatile poet in Sanskrit. Sangram Dev, a Brahmin of Kishtwar Town, wrote "Rajvansh Kirti Komudi" — a historical account of the Rajas of Kishtwar in Sanskrit verse but the manuscript is not available now. All these were written in Devnagari script. Pandit Hari Lal Jyotshi, a renowned astrologer and writer, wrote "Shrithal



Devi Darshanam" in Sanskrit verse with Hindi translation in recent past. Thus Kishtwar had been the cradle of Sanskrit language and literature from ancient times. It is a misfortune that the old manuscripts have not been preserved up to this time. Sanskrit lost its glory as soon as Muslims penetrated in this erstwhile state.

### **Hindi Literature**

In medieval times Hindi literature and poetry made great strides in the courts of kings and in public gatherings. Raja Anayatullah Singh composed himself poetry in Hindi. Pt. Dina Nath S/o Shata of Kishtwar town wrote 'History of Kishtwar' in Hindi in 1885 A.D. which was taken away by Molvi Hashmatullah, got it translated in Urdu and used it for writing History of Kishtwar in Tarikh-i-Jammu. Original manuscript is not available. Present day Kishtwar has witnessed emergence of some poets and writers in Hindi language. Krishana Mehta of Kishtwar former Member Parliament, wrote "Kashmir Par Hamla" in Hindi.

### **Persian Literature:**

Since the advent of Islam in Kishtwar in 17<sup>th</sup> century A.D. and influx of Muslims from Kashmir Persian made inroads in the royal courts and, by and by, became the court language and received royal patronage. Raja Maha Singh, Raja Kirat Singh, Raja Anayatullah Singh and last ruler Mohd. Teg Singh were lovers of fine arts and composed verses in Persian language. They held poetic congregations in their courts. Nassar-ud-Din 'Nasar', Zia-ud-din 'Zia', and some others were Persian scholars and poets. The former translated history of Kishtwar in Persian and the latter wrote 'Roztul Arfeen' in Persian verse. Ghulam Rasul Kamgar was also a Persian scholar who received Rashtrapati and Cultural Academy awards for his meritorious work on Persian literature.

### **Urdu Literature**

Urdu could not make dent in Kishtwar in the past. However, modern Kishtwar has produced some scholars, poets and writers

in Urdu who have contributed to Urdu literature. 'Ishrat Kashmiri' was Urdu Poet and scholar who wrote *Tarikh-i-Kishtwar* in Urdu. Gulam Rasul 'Nishat' a Cultural Academy award winner was a versatile writer and poet of repute in Urdu who has authored about a dozen of books both in Urdu prose and poetry and thus contributed a lot to Urdu literature. Ghulam Nabi Doolwal, popularly known as 'Janbaz Kishtwari' has also contributed sufficiently to Urdu literature. Ghulam Mohd. Butt 'Ulfat Kishtwari' is an Urdu poet whose work is a solid contribution to Urdu literature. Many other poets and scholars have been contributing and enriching Urdu literature. Among them is Wali Mohd. 'Aseer Kishtwari' who has written 'Tasveer-i-Zila Doda' in prose and some other books. Abdul Rashid 'Fidda Kishtwari' Naseema Bano writer of "Roohe Nishat" Man Mohan Gupta 'Qaesar', Jagdish Raj Rana 'Ushaq Kishtwari', Chuni Lal Parihar 'Talakh Kishtwari' and some others also contributed to Urdu literature

### **Kashmiri Literature**

Kishtwar has also produced a good number of poets and scholars who wrote in Kashmiri. Ghulam Rasul Kamgar has translated Dr. Iqbal's "Israr-o-Ramaz" in Kashmiri and also composed 'Natya Kalam' in this language. Ghulam Nabi 'Janbaz Kishtwari' composed verses in Kashmiri. "Pholwain Sanger" is his contribution to this language. Ghulam Qadir Beerwari composed verses in Kashmiri. His collections "Change-Reh" has been published by his son Aseer Kishtwari who also writes verses in Kashmiri language. Besides, Hans Raj 'Wazir Kishtwari', Sohan Lal Ganjoo of Ekhala, Nishat Kishtwari, Ulfat Kishtwari, Parvez 'Ibne Tayab', Fidda Kishtwari, Mushtaq Kishtwari, Syad Kishtwari, Beteb, Mohd. Amin Doolwal, Hasrat Kishtwari and many others have contributed and enriched Kashmiri literature and the process goes on

### **Kishtwari Literature**

Kishtwari language has not been able to develop any reasonable quantum of literature of its own because of non



availability of any script and royal patronage. The earliest works in this field have not come down to posterity in any written form. The manuscripts have been destroyed by the invaders. However, Kishtwari folk-lore and folk-music are replete with poetry in Kishtwari language which is available in Dogri and Persian scripts. Some people who have composed poetry in Kishtwari language are: Kashmiri Lal 'Roop Kishtwari' of Matta, Lassa Joo Rana, Tara Chand 'Tarak', Hans Raj 'Wazir', Janbaz Kishtwari, Badri Nath Palmari, Chander Kishtwari, Mohan Garib, Jagdish Raj 'Dilgir', Swami Raj 'Mastana', Bansi Lal Bhagat and others. They are contributing a lot to enrich this literature. Recently Kewal Krishan Sharma Retd. Principal, has brought out a book 'Kishtwari Bhasha, Sahitya and Sanskriti' in Devnagari script. He has elaborately discussed Kishtwari language and compiled the poems and verses composed by Kishtwari poets in Kishtwari language. He himself composes verses in Kishtwari language which are thought provoking. Thus he has been contributing greatly for the development of Kishtwari literature.

### **Paddri Literature**

Paddri is a Pahari language spoken by the people of Paddar Pargana of Kishtwar. Some poets of Paddar have been composing songs in this language and contributing to Paddri literature in an indigenous style. Rattan Lal of Gulabgarh, Jia Lal Palsar of Tattapani, Shadi Lal of Masoo, Sobha Ram, Nath Ram of Atholi and Bhagat Ram of Sohal are some of the poets of Paddar who have been contributing to Paddari literature.

### **Music and Dance**

Kishtwar has developed an indigenous style of music and dance which has become part and parcel of socio-cultural life of its people. Some Rajas of Kishtwar were lovers of music and fine arts. Sangeet Sangrah, a book on classical music, was composed by one Shri Vak during Raja Narinder Sen's reign. During the reign of Raja Sangram Singh, in about 13<sup>th</sup> C.A.D. a festival 'Kantak Yatra' was organized in the Parade Ground

Kishtwar in the month of Bhadoon where dancing and singing around an effigy of an elephant was performed for two days every year. Local musicians and folk dancers added to its glory and splendour. Later on in 19th C.A.D. Bhands (Opera dancers) joined this festival. Bhands were superb artists of music, dance, acting and mimicry and played on different types of musical instruments like 'Chang, Rabab, Surnaie' and beat different kinds of drums. 'Zagroo' is another purely indigenous Kishtwari music and dance held in Saroor, Sarthal, Nagseni, Paddar, Palmar, Thakarie, Kontwara and other parganas of Kishtwar. Enchanting tunes of flute and 'Dhoce'— a kind of drum, make people dance and sing around a bonfire for the whole night singing, dancing, and enjoying themselves. Janbaz Kishtwari introduced "Challant" music which is of pure Kishtwari origin. During harvesting of crops, grass cutting, winnowing, husking and planting of paddy, both male and female, sing in chorus. In marriage ceremonies ladies sing in chorus various songs in Kishtwari language aptly meant for different stages of the ceremony.

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## Kishtwari Language

Kishtwar is the land of harmonious culture and variety of spoken languages and dialects. Both educated and uneducated speak the same language. Geographically, culturally, racially, linguistically and ethnically erstwhile Kishtwar state and the present Kishtwar District was not a homogeneous unit. It is a multilingual district. People speak Kishtwari, Kishtwari-Kashmiri, Phari, Gogri, Paddari and Saroori languages. Hindus of Kishtwar, Marwa and Chatru tehsils speak Kishtwari whereas Paddari is spoken by all communities in Paddar Tehsil. Hindus of Saroor pargana and Bawanjwah speak Saroori— a dialects of Bhaderwahi. Kishtwari language, though unwritten, has various dialects of its own in Dachhan, Udil, Nagseni, Kontwara, Trigam, Thakarie, Keshwan, Palmar, Chingam, Pogal, Paristan, Dessa and Siraz. No doubt, Pogali and Sirazi are dialects of Kishtwari language, the mode of sentence structure, tone and accents is to a great extent the same as that of Kishtwari.

### Origin of Kishtwari

Kishtwari has originated from Prakrit – the spoken language of common people in ancient times. The literary language was Sanskrit which has close relationship with Prakrit. It can conveniently be called sister language of Kashmiri as both have originated from Prakrit which is much simpler than Sanskrit.

Prakrit has originated from Prakriti meaning real and natural. Prakrit was used by common people in their speech but the literally language used by the literate and cultured people was

Sanskrit. Grierson, the linguist writes in Linguistic Survey of India Vol IX part IV page 6 "Kalhana's Rajatarangini is full of references to the Khasas. Khashalya is certainly the valley of Khaisal which leads from Marbal pass on the south east corner of Kashmir down to Kishtwar. They spoke a language closely allied to Sanskrit". This language was definitely Prakrit which was spoken by the people of Kishtwar. Kishtwari is a Prakrit having close affinity with Sanskrit. It was originally written in Kishtwari language having some resemblance with Takri, Sharda and Lahanda characters. In the editorial of Pali Dictionary Swami Dawaka Das Shashtri, the editor and translator of Milind- Panho Pali in Hindi, writes at page one that the language which gave birth to Indian languages and which is spoken in various Indian states at present though with some difference is called Prakrit. Thus these languages are called Prakrits. One of the earliest Prakrits was Pali which became the official language of Buddhists. It has been agreed upon by history writers that Milind Panho or Questions of King Milind— a Pali treatise, was first written in Kishtwari language and in Kishtwari script. The original text is, however, not available anywhere but its English, Hindi, Chinese, Sinhali and Pali translations are available at present.

Jyoteeshwar Pathik writes at page 39 in "Cultural Heritage of the Dogras," The argument between Menander and Nagsen resulted in a treatise called Milinda Panho which was later translated into Pali and many other languages.

The scholars on Kashmir history claim that it came from Nagsena and was written in old Kishtwari language having a close resemblance with Sanskrit. Prof. Mohy-ud-Din Hajni also writes at page 4 of his book 'Kashur Shairi'. "It has now been admitted that Buddhist sage Nagsena was perhaps Kashmiri who wrote his book Milinda Panho in the then Kishtwari-Kashmiri in a dialogue form. It was translated in Pali and Sinhali. The original having lost, its translation is extant."

### **Kishtwari Language**

Like Kashmiri Kishtwari is also a language though Grierson



has called Kishtwari a dialect of Kashmiri and a mixed dialect. But when this issue of languages and dialects is thoroughly analysed, Grierson's postulation is found untenable. He has not probably studied Kishtwari and its dialects Pogali Sirazi etc. He seems to have been influenced by Kishtwari-Kashmiri, spoken by Muslims of Kishtwar and its spectacular resemblance with Kashmiri which is not pure Kashmiri but has close affinity to the Kashmiri of the valley. So Kishtwari- Kashmiri is a dialect of Kashmiri. At page 237 in a 'Gazeteer of Kashmir' the writers say "The language of Kishtwar is not that of Kashmir but is said to resemble the dialect spoken on hills in the neighbourhood of Simla." This, too, cannot be considered as true because Kishtwari language is altogether a different language having close affinity to Pali, Prakrit and Sanskrit. Kishtwari language has been preserved from the admixture of words and phrases from other languages and dialects. However, the original Prakrit spoken by common man of Kishtwar in olden times has absorbed some words from Dogri, Panjabi and Persian languages but to a limited extent. The present form of Kishtwari is the direct outcome of Prakrit, Pali or Sanskrit.

Language as per Dictionary definition, is a system of communication used by the people of a particular country or profession consisting of sounds, words and grammar or a system of communication used by the people of a particular country or profession. And dialect is a form of a language that people speak in a particular part of a country containing some different words and grammar. It can be a regional dialect. A dialect is simply any habitual variety of a language regional or social. Language has a written literature and a script of its own. So far Kishtwari language is concerned it can also be termed as a language though at present has neither any script nor literature. Script is a set of letters used for writing a particular language. Grierson has, however, given a list of Kishtwari alphabets (letters) at page 234 in Linguistic survey of India Vol-VIII part-II reproduced at the end of this chapter. He has pointed out that Kishtwari had not its language only but alphabets also which he names Kishtwari script.



Some historians and writers are of the view that Milind Panho was written in Kishtwari script and language was also Kishtwari. Since Kishtwari had originated from Prakrit or Sanskrit, the language of Kishtwari people in ancient times must have been Pali— simpler than Sanskrit, written in Kishtwari script. There are numerous Kishtwari words spoken by the people of Kishtwar which have great affinity to Pali or Sanskrit. In fact, almost every word of pure Kishtwari is a Sanskrit word, some in degenerated form whereas some other very surprisingly in true form. Kewal Krishan Shama in his book “Kishtwari Bhasha Sahitya aur Sanskriti” has worked out a number Kishtwari words, phrases and sentences having great affinity to Sanskrit language. D.C. Sharma, the author of this book, has also given a glossary at page 199 of his book entitled “History and Culture of Kishtwar” showing marked difference in Kashmiri, Kishtwari, Sanskrit language groups. Here also Kishtwari seems akin to Sanskrit.

Ishrat Kashmiri writes at page M in his authored book *Tarikh-i-Kishtwar* “Kishtwari is not a dialect because old Kashmiri was not a dialect. Since it got no royal patronage it remained unattended by the poets and scholars. However, it remained alive because of the patronage of common people”. It is a fact that due to lack of royal patronage Kishtwari language could not develop its literature in written form. During hey days of Kishtwar some poets, scholars and history writers wrote books on topography, classical music, poems, literature of which we only find references here and there in old records but the original manuscripts have either been taken away by scholars or destroyed by the invading forces and vagaries of the time. As such there is nothing available or traceable which can throw light on the subject. A heap of manuscripts in old Kishtwari and Sharda scripts were found in Raghunath temple Kishtwar by the author together with Ram Sevak Sharma, Pradhan Acharya Bhartiya Vidya Mandir Kishtwar but when the priest of the temple was approached for studying them after some time it was revealed that the manuscripts had been immersed into the river Chandra Bhaga as per past practice. Thus old record, if any, has not come down to posterity for



research to bring out the past from obscurity. The old manuscript had also been taken away by the Scholars who used them for publication and personal record.

Of late we have found some inscriptions on the stone plates of a temple built all in stones at Saiya Draman in Nagseni pargana of Kishtwar. The inscribed letters have been found in Sharda script but some inscriptions which had been termed as "unknown scripts" by D.C. Sharma in 'History and Culture of Kishtwar' some letters resemble with the alphabets in Kishtwari script. However, these inscriptions have not so far been deciphered. Grierson has not recorded all the alphabets of Kishtwari script. He is of the view that Kishtwari was intermediary between Sharda script of Kashmir and Takri script of Panjab.

Bhola Nath Tiwari writes at page 342 in his Book *Bhasha Vgian* in Hindi "Kishtwar located on the south east of Kashmir has its own language written in its own script. It has originated from Sharda".

Historians believe that Kishtwari is an off-shoot of the Indo-Aryan family or Sanskrit language. The present spoken Kishtwari language has considerably been influenced by its neighbouring languages like Bhaderwahi, Dogri, Kashmiri and other Pahari languages. According to Sukh Dev Singh Charak Kishtwari alongwith Dogri, Chibhali and Pahari (Rambani, Bhadarwahi) Kashmiri belong to Aryan group of languages. Grierson, however, is of the opinion that Kashmiri language of which Kishtwari is a dialect has a Dard basis. It has come to a large extent under the influence of the Indo-Aryan languages spoken to its south. It has a literature. This has not been substantiated by other historians. They opine that Kishtwari language belongs to Indo-Aryan family of languages. It is akin to Sanskrit and as such cannot have Dard basis. Kashmiri of the present times has undergone great changes. It has absorbed words from Persian, Pashto, Arabic and other neighbouring languages but Kishtwari has remained unchanged to a large extent.

## Kishtwari Alphabets

English	Hindi	Kishtwari
a, ā	अ	म
i, ī, ē	अ अ इ	६
u, ū, y, ou	उ ऊ औ औ	७
ai	ऐ	मज ६
ka	क	२
kā	का	रम २।
ki, ki	कि की	२।
ku	कु	२२
kū	कु	२६
kō	को	२७
kau	कौ	२८
kami	कम	२९
ka	का	३०
kha	ख	३१
ga	ग	३२

English	Hindi	Kishtwari
ba	ब	५
bha	भ	७
ma	म	५५
Ya	य	५५
ra	र	५५
la	ल	५५
va	व	५५
Sha	श	५५
Ka	क	५५
Sa	स	५५



## Kishtwari Bhashya

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Kishtwar is the land of harmonious culture. Variety of languages and dialects are spoken in the mountainous terrain. It is an old saying that "char kos par pani badle, ath kos par vani", that the dialectical changes take place after every fifteen to twenty kilometres and more so in such an area as Kishtwar which has been inhabited by emigrants of different parts of the country with different languages. The geographical barriers, separating one illaqa from the other, do also widen this difference.

Many scholars have done research work on the languages of this area as per their source and study including Sir George Grierson. In his book 'Linguistic Survey of India' he has considered Kishtwari Bhashya as a dialect of Kashmiri language. But Kishtwari, which has a close affinity with Sanskrit, cannot be considered as a dialect. No doubt some words are common in Kishtwari and Kashmiri but that is because of their common origin.

To discuss about the origin of any language is a complex task. The views and opinions put forth by eminent scholars and linguists so far are untenable and incomplete. However, the oldest view in this connection is "when God created man He also created a language by giving him intellect so that he can communicate his ideas with other people in the society". This very thought was strengthened by the statement of a German scholar Stissmulch who said that language was not man made but direct gift of God on earth. Rigveda is the oldest book in the library of the world. Therefore, Vedic Sanskrit is considered mostly the oldest language.



Literary Sanskrit originated from Vedic Sanskrit. Later on Pali and Prakrit also originated from literary Sanskrit. Pali and Prakrit being simple form of literary Sanskrit became spoken languages of the common people. Since, literary Sanskrit was in written form it did not go under any change. Pali and Prakrit being easily spoken, languages went under many changes and Kishtwari is also an outcome of the same change.

Kishtwari Bhashya has no script of its own available at this time. It has a close affinity with Sanskrit on the basis of 'Tadbhava and Tatsama' origin of words. It is completely a proverbial language and hardly one can find a sentence which does not have any proverb or phrase in it. This depicts the proper development of language. The semantic and syntactic study of both the languages, Sanskrit and Kishtwari, show their closeness linguistically as well as culturally.

In the absence of its script and literature Kishtwari Bhashya remained preserved and alive by passing on verbally from one generation to another. The child learns it from family members and friends as mother tongue and thus passed it on to the coming generation. It may be considered a blessing from God or a miracle of Kishtwari Bhashya that a child who speaks Kishtwari can easily learn Dogri, Kashmiri etc. Prevalent in this part of the country. But presently we have been overtaken by the trend of speaking to our children in languages other than our mother tongue. No doubt English, Urdu, Hindi are important and pivotal for keeping pace with fast developing competitions in the world but still our mother tongue is a most important sweet language and this must get prominence during day to day conversation.

Mahatma Gandhi once said, "I want to keep windows of my mind open for fresh breeze, but I also want to keep my feet firmly planted in home soil." Therefore, it is time that steps are taken to preserve our rich linguistic heritage.

Dismayed over the minimum use of Kishtwari language in our family conversation the prominent citizens of Kishtwar made a passionate appeal to all the parents to encourage their children to converse in Kishtwari. A body of learned persons was also



constituted which was named "Sahitya Kala Sangam Kishtwar". The body has been assigned the work of preservation and promotion of Kishtwari Bhashya. The language portrays the real pictures of the culture of society to which it belongs. Culture is preserved by literature and the base of literature is its language. Kishtwari Bhashya portrays the culture of Kishtwar. All customs, beliefs, festivals etc are hidden in it.

### Kishtwari Bhashya as a Common Language

The common language has no narrow mindedness. It includes, accepts and adopts common words from other languages be it national or international. We don't find any languages presently in the same form, style and tone as it was spoken by our ancestors long long ago. Passage of time has changed the tone, style and form of the language and Kishtwari Bhashya has not remained untouched. It has also embraced many national and international words such as:

(a)	Chimta	चिमटा
	Mukka	मुक्का
	Chamach	चमच
(b)	Ijjat	इज्जत
	Cigarettee	सिगरेट
	Store	स्टोर
	Kitchen	किचन
	Bathroom	बाथरूम
	Sugar	शूगर

### Darshan and Chintan in Kishtwari Bhashya

The social use of language in its contribution towards 'Darshan and Chintan' make the very language philosophical. Keeping in view the social benefits, local scholars have composed 'Bhajans', marriage songs and other prayers in this language from the ancient times, which are sung on the appropriate occasions, inspiring people for observing moral values and social service.

**Kishtwari as Visargant Bhashya**

There are many words in Kishtwari, like Sanskrit, ending with a stress of sound 'a'. This is called Visargant in Sanskrit.

हथः	Hatha	Hand
कथः	Katha	Jalks
किताबः	Kitaba	Books
हलः	Hala	Hal

Words with one Phonetic 'ध्वनि' giving different meanings as in Sanskrit:

शोण्ड	Shond	Face
रोण्ड	Rond	Stone
दण्ड	Dand	Punishment
गण्ड	Gand	Bind
पाण्ड	Pand	Poteli
चण्ड	Chand	Slap
रण्ड	Rand	Widow

**Meaningful and Meaningless Words Spoken at the Same Breath:**

दाल-वाल	Dal-wal	Pulses etc
मन्जि-वन्जि	Mangia-Wangia	Chapati etc
चाय-वाय	Chaya- waya	Tea etc

Here first word is meaningful whereas the entailed word is meaningless.

**Words with Hidden Meaning as in Sanskrit**

Like Sanskrit in Kishtwari also some words are spoken in conversation having some hidden meaning.

Suppose there is a quarrel in some family, people will say: there in Mahabhartar in their home. If some one tells a long story of his own, people will say: he is narrating Ramayana.



**Words of Satire**

We use some words and sentences ironically when we say:		
A poor person.....	he is rich (dhani)	धानि
Weak man.....	Pahalwan	पहलवान
A liar.....	Satya wan	सत्यवादी

**Words of Reception of Reptition Giving the Same Meaning**

हिमालय पर्वत	Himalya parvat	
गस नेर	Gus nayar	go away
वारिया ज्यादः	Wariya jiyadha	too much

**Words used in Honour and Politeness**

There are some sentences and words in Kishtwari Bhashya which we use in different ways to be more polite and civilized:

When some one dies, we don't say he died. Instead we say:  
सु थु पूरः ग्यमुत - Su Thu Poorha Gayamut - he has completed his life span.

Ladies generally do not name their husbands and elders out of respect and regard in general public. Instead, if asked they convey it through some other source present at that occasion:

चलः जबुखेंय तोसि इमनून नामः

Chala Jabuk Tosi Imnon Nam—please tell him the name of my husband.

Humbleness and etiquette has been a part and parcel of Kishtwari language. We talk to a person in plural form to give him more regard and respect as Tosi kiya thayav karan- त्वसि क्या थयव करन - what are your doing, sir.

**Words of Passionate and Love in Kishtwari Bhashya**

In Kishtwari Bhashya people give nick names to their young ones out of passion and love and call them:- लट्टू - रंजवए अछिनून ग्वाश Achenun gawash etc. Here word for word meaning in not to be taken, but it has some great meaning for them who use these words.

## Shabad Prayog (Word Usage) in Kishtwari Bhashya

Words which are used same to same in Sanskrit and Kishtwari are called Tatsam words:-

SANSKRIT	HINDI	KISHTWARI
Ashram	आश्रम	आश्रम
Agyan	अज्ञान	अज्ञान
Van	वन	वन
Pooja	पूजा	पूजा
Amavas	अमावास	अमावास
Pooran mashi	पूर्णमाजी	पूर्णमाजी
Sandhya	संध्या	संध्या
Buddhi	बुद्धि	बुद्धि
Ganga jal	गंगाजल	गंगाजल
Vighan	विघ्न	विघ्न
Moorakh	मूर्ख	मूर्ख
Anparh	अनपढ़	अनपढ़
Dani	दानी	दानी
Dihan	ध्यान	ध्यान
Seva	सेवा	सेवा
Amrit	अमृत	अमृत

Sanskrit words which are used in Kishtwari with slightest change are called Tadhbhava words:-

SANSKRIT	KISHTWARI	MEANING
पत्र - Patra	पतर - pater	Leaf
हस्त - Hasth	हथ - hath	Hand
निद्रा - Nidra	निदर - ninder	Sleep
लवण - Lavan	लून - loon	salt
ग्राम - Gram	गाम - gam	village

Kewal Krishan Sharma  
Retd. Principal



## Other Languages Spoken in Kishtwar

Kishtwar is the land of harmonious culture and variety of spoken languages/dialects. Having vast area under its occupation, almost half of Kashmir divisions, people in hilly areas speak differently. Only Kishtwari-Kashmiri, a dialect of Kashmiri language, is spoken by all the Muslims living in Kishtwar district though they are also conversant with the pahari dialects of their local areas.

### **Kishtwari-Kashmiri**

It is a dialect of Kashmiri language and George Grierson has probably called Kishtwari a dialect of Kashmiri for this Kishtwari-Kashmiri dialect. It is spoken by all the Muslims in Kishtwar district. Grierson, the linguist, says at page 4 part III of Linguistic Survey of India Vol. VIII "Kashmiri is the language of the valley of Kashmir and its neighboring valley. Although it has a Dard basis, it has come to a large extent under the influence of the Indo-Aryan languages spoken to its south. It is the only language which has a literature." According to P.N.K. Bamzai, the author of 'History of Kashmir' page 563-64, "It is traditionally believed by the Kashmiri Pandits and scholars like Jules Black, George Morgenstern and Ralph L. Turner agree with them that Kashmiri is an off- shoot of the Indo-Aryan or Sanskrit language."

In ancient times people of Kashmir viz. Kashmiri Pandits spoke a language which was called Kashmiri. It assumed the present form with the passage of time due to foreign influx. It absorbed many words from Persian, Arabic, Dardic and Tibetan

language groups. Old Kashmiri had close relationship with Kishtwar having the same source of origin-Prakrit, Pali or Sanskrit. The old Kashmiri had developed its own script, the famous Sharda script. The old manuscript in Sharda script have till date been preserved in Kashmir. Presently Persian script has been adopted for this language. However, Kishtwari language, too, had its own script called Kishtwari script and the historians believe that *Milind-Panho* or *Questions of King Milind of Sakal* (Sialkot of Pakistan) was originally written in Pali language and the script used was Kishtwari script. Some even consider old Kishtwari and Pali quite close to each other and perhaps old Kishtwari was Pali itself.

There is a great variation in Kashmiri spoken in the valley of Kashmir and speech of common Muslims of Kishtwar. To segregate their identity the converted Muslims of Kishtwar adopted Kashmiri of migrated Muslims of Kashmir to Kishtwar as their spoken language. Since their influx in Kishtwar in 18<sup>th</sup> century some Kishtwari words still continued to be spoken by them during the course of their speech. Thus there developed a change in the tone, accent and even words in Kishtwari-Kashmiri and Kashmiri language. It can, as such, be called a dialect of Kashmiri.

Kalhana, the reputed historian of Kashmir and author of *Raja-tarangini* written in 1148-49 A.D., had no knowledge of Kishtwar principality. He has referred to Kishtwar at a very few places in *Raja-tarangini*. He was ignorant of the fact that some parts of Rig Ved, the sacred scripture of Hindus, and Yajur Ved had been compiled by Rishis (Seers) at Rikenvas then called Rishi Niwas in Warwan area and Kiber Nala in Dachhan area respectively. He is even silent about Nagsen, the greatest Buddhist scholar and intellectual who authored *Mindo-Panho*, which Kishtwar had produced. Kashmir and Kishtwar had thus neither any political nor geographical links during those days. In ancient times Prakrit was used in common speech all over India with a local tinge. Pali was the outcome of Prakrit and was easier than Sanskrit—the literary language of that time. Therefore, Kashmiri is considered as sister language of Kishtwari on the basis of having the same source of origin—Prakrit.



### **Paddari**

Paddari is a pahari dialect spoken by the Hindus of Paddar. Muslims settled in Paddar also speak Paddari although their mother tongue is Kashmiri, Paddari is a sweet language like Bhaderwahi but has no close affinity with it. Paddar at present is a tehsil of Kishtwar district. It has very little been influenced by the common speech of the people living in her neighbourhood viz. Ladakh, Tibet, Himachal Pradesh, Bhaderwah, Bhalesa and Nagseni area of Kishtwar tehsil. It is also an off-shoot of Indo-Aryan group of languages.

### **Ladakhi**

The Bhots of Paddar living in Hango, Haloti, Suncham, Lussani, Kabban, Chakroi and Tun Villages of Bhot Nala and Ishtihari and Gandhari Nala of Paddar speak Ladakhi dialect which is quite different from Paddari. These Bhots/Buddhists have migrated from Zaskar via Umasi La and settled in the above mentioned villages. They have preserved their own language but has been influenced by Paddari.

### **Gojri Language**

Kishtwar district, of late, has been inhabited by Gujjars also. They have settled down to agriculture in Chatru, Udil, Keshwan, Palmar, Cheerji, Pullar, Nagseni, Dool, Trigam, Saroor, Bawanjwah, Kidru Paddar etc. During summer they move up to green pastures on the upper reaches along with their cows and buffaloes. They speak a language which is called Gojri, Parimu or Hindki. This language is akin to western Panjabi and belong to Rajasthani group of languages where from they have migrated to Kishtwar. One of the most interesting fact about Gujjars is that they speak the same language throughout J&K state even after their migration from Rajasthan or Gurjaradesh. As a result of interaction they have imbibed some words of other local dialects but they have preserved their original language in their homes. It is mostly written in Persian script.

### **Saroori and Bawanjwali**

Saroor and Bawanjwah are parganas of Kishtwar district. These have, ever since the rule of Kishtwar Rajas, remained part of Kishtwar state. The people of these areas speak Saroori in Saroor pargana and Bawanjwali in Bawanjwah Pargana which have close affinity with Bhaderwahi— a pahari language. These are dialects of Bhaderwahi language but in a degenerated form. The accent and speech vary to a great extent in these dialects. Bhaderwahi has no script of its own but its literature is being developed in Devnagari script as also in Persian script.



## Saffron in Kishtwar

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The erstwhile Kishtwar state, presently a district in Jammu and Kashmir State, has an area of 7824 square kms with Kishtwar, Marwa, Atholi (Paddar) and Chatru as its tehsils. It has a population of about 2,25,420 souls. Out of 156 revenue villages of Kishtwar district only four revenue villages namely Hiryal, Matta, Pochhal and Lach Daya Ram are famous for the production of saffron. About 150 hectares of the cultivable land has been occupied for saffron cultivation. On an average about five quintals of saffron is produced annually in this part of Kishtwar district called Mandal.

The Botanical name of saffron is 'Crocus Sativas'. Its sanskrit name is 'kum kum' or Lohit. Kashmiri call it 'kong' whereas Kishtwari pronounce it as 'kung'. Its Persian name is 'zafran'. It is popularly known as 'kesar' throughout India. It is produced in Spain, Iran, France, Sicily and Jammu & Kashmir. The saffron of Spain is superior to that of Kashmir. At present it produces about 70% of world's saffron produce. India takes second place. The quality of Kishtwar saffron is superior to that of Pompur in Kashmir. In Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri translated in English by Alexander Rogers at page 140 the author writes, "In Kishtwar there are produced much wheat, barley, lentils, millets and pulses. Differing from Kashmir it produces little rice. Its saffron is finer than that of Kashmir..... All the saffron is assigned, as pay, to a body of Rajputs and to 700 musketeers (topchi) who are old retainers". It all depends upon the quality of land, climate of the place and technique of plucking flowers, separating of red and yellow carpels

from the petals. Moreover, it requires moderate rain during the period of planting of bulbs and flowering.

The production of saffron in India dates back to Mahabharata period about five thousand years back. There is a Sloka (verse) in the 27th Chapter of Sabha Parva in Mahabharata part 1 which mentions the name of 'Lohit Mandal' alongwith ten other Mandalas. There is no doubt that Kishtwar was one of the eleven states in Divigrit now called 'Duggar' and then 'Duggar Desh'. Lohit in sanskrit means 'kum kum' (saffron). So it seems that Kishtwar produced saffron even in ancient times. The area under saffron cultivation in Kishtwar around Kishtwar town is called "Mandal" even at present which has remained out of ancient Lohit Mandal. The saffron of this place is superior in quality, fragrance and usefulness than that of other places. In History of Kashmir page 223 P.N.K. Bamzai writes, "the cultivation of saffron has been a monopoly of Kashmir from ancient times. According to Kalhana it was one of the five things for which Kashmir was famous and the privilege of royalty to use it as a scented slove or emollient. The legend about its origin connects it with the plateau of Padampura (Pompur) where the first bulb was planted by the famous physician, Wagbhatta, who recieved it as a gift from Naga Takshaka on his being cured of an eye disease." During Buddha's period saffron colour was officially introduced for colouring the robes of 'bikhshus' or disciples of Buddha. There is, however, no evidene that saffron blubs had been imported from outside India to this place. Its mention in holy scriptures and old languages justify all this.

Saffron is a condiment used in medicines, cooking of vegetables and applying of a mark (tilak) on the forehead by the Hindus in India. Its aroma and colour is considered auspicious in this country. Its taste is subtle. If a bit more of it is crunched under teeth, it tastes bitter. Two or three carpels (stigmas) crushed and mixed in milk make it a healthy tonic. Its fragrance pervades the whole atmosphere and gives special flavour and colour to cooked food, meat, pudding, sweets, rice dishes, biryani etc. It is



mixed with "kehwa" tea espacially in Kashmir which makes it supreme in colour and flavour. Besides, it is digestive, sedative, curative and exhilarant. Now a days it is the costliest condiment.

Saffron flowers bloom in the month of October-November every year. The saffron bulbs, are planted in the month of July, August and September. It requires a particular kind of soil for cultivation. The land proposed for this purpose is available in Mandal area of Kishtwar and Pompur in Kashmir. At no other place in J&K or India the blubs thus planted will produce any crop. The bulbs decompose and do not yield any crop. By the end of August and September the saffron cultivated plots are made soft with pickaxe. The overgrown grass is removed. This proccess is carried on for about three times during this period. In the beginning the piece of land required for this purpose has to be ploughed twice or thrice so as to make its soil fit for planting bulbs. It must have some moisture at the time of planting bulbs. The flowers bloom in the month of October and November every year. These are picked early in the morning and then stored properly for two or three days and then red and yellow capels are separated from the petals. Each flower has six lilic petals inside which nestles three red carpels (stigmas) and three yellow carpels (stamen). The stem of three red carpels is called saffron whereas three yellow carpels is called safranin (Patti). After storing for two or three days red and yellow carpels are detached from the flowers separately and dried in the autumn sunshine. It is at this time of detaching that 'mongra, lachha or turla' varities are given shape before drying in the sunshine. For mongra type the red part is trimmed from the white stem and kept separately for drying. For 'turla' or 'guchhi' type the white stem alongwith red carpels are arranged in a particulars way and then twisted together to give the shape of 'turla' whereas the white stem alongwith red carpels when dried together without arranging them is called 'lachha'. 'Monrga' is the best type of saffron but it can easily be adulterated. So it is not prepared by the people engaged in its cultivation. Substances like turmeric, merigold and sunflower petals or bits of wax and molasses are mixed in the 'patti' to give it



saffron colour. The original property of saffron is thus spoilt. From business point of view and for easy recognition of pure saffron the 'turla/guchhi' is the best type. Hence it is costlier. The present day rate of saffron of Kishtwar is between Rs. 90000 and 1,00,000 per kg. Safranin (patti) is the yellow part of the flower. These yellow carpels are dried in sunshine. It is used in medicines and for colouring and preparing of adulterated saffron. Its present day cost is about Rs 1500/- per kg. Its produce is twice that of saffron.

The saffron bulbs or corms, (guli) are produced in the saffron fields. Once the bulbs are planted in a piece of land, they give crop for four to five years. Every year the soil of the saffron field have to be cleared of grass and made soft and plain. The same process continues for the rest of years also. On 4th or 5th year bulbs are extracted from the soil. If everything goes well, the bulbs multiply and people get good crop. These bulbs are then cleared of the extra outer layer. The rotten or decayed one are kept separate and the outer layers are removed then. These are then boiled in water and dried in sunshine and made ready for sale. Healthy bulbs are again planted in the soil made for it. This time it requires more land. The dried up bulbs are sold in the market for Rs.1000 to 2000 per quintal. These are used in Pharmacies for prepairing medicines. The cost of healthy saffron bulbs is about Rs 6000 to 8000 per quintal.

The plucking of saffron flowers require skill. In the early morning before sunrise the flowers are easily picked. As soon as the Sun rises in the east flowers start blooming. Plucking becomes difficult. Soon the flowers fully bloom and only the petals come to hand and stem remains inside the soil. Sometimes only carpels are collected. This way Turla/Guchhi' cannot be prepared. Carpels are detached one by one from the flowers and then dried up to give it the shape of lachha. Often the flowers, when bloom in large number, remain stored for more time and cannot be separated easily. These begin to decay and are dried up in the sunshine to save then from any loss. It takes much time to separate carpels from dried up flowers. It appears to be a tiresome job. People



having a bumper crop engage labour for separating carpels from flowers. The dried up saffron and saffranin is then stored in either earthen pots or plastic containers or glass containers. In case of slight moisture saffron becomes blackish in colour and loses its quality and fragrance. The skill for preservation of saffron is most important.

The piece of land brought under saffron cultivation has to be safeguarded from tress passing. Animals should not enter such fields and as such fields require fencing. People plant a particular kind of shrub around their fields thereby save their fields from any damage. After flowering grass comes out of the saffron bulbs. It is not removed till it becomes dry by April May. Thus a lot of labour is required for the upkeep of all such saffron fields.

In Pompur Kashmir a different type of technique had been adopted for plucking flowers and separating carpels from petals. People pluck flowers after sun rise when flowers fully bloom. After thrashing them with small sticks the flowers are placed in a bucket full of water. The red carpels settle at the bottom of the vessel whereas the petals float on the surface. In this way petals are separated and red carpels are taken out and dried in the sunshine. However, under this method 'saffranin' and the white stem of red carpels are lost with flowers. Only 'mongra' type is produced. Much of the fragrance, colour and flavour of saffron is minimized under this technique. People have started to revert to the technique adopted in Kishtwar.

Resarch on the development of saffron is now on. In Kishtwar a Saffron Development Farm has been established at Berwar about three to four Kms. from Kishtwar town in Mandal area for resarch.



## College and District Agitation in Kishtwar

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Kishtwar, the erstwhile state, was first downgraded to the status of a province of Jammu division in 1821 A.D. and subsequently further downgraded to the status of a district in 1875 A.D. during Maharaj Ranbir Singh's rule. However, in 1909 A.D. Kishtwar was reduced to the status of a tehsil of Udhampur district and in 1948 A.D. Kishtwar became one of the tehsils of Doda district. Doda was a sub-tehsil (Naibat) then. Kishtwar lagged behind in the field of development since the dawn of independence on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947. Since that time J&K government remained averse to its progress and development. Tehsil Kishtwar has now been raised to the status of a district. It comprises Marwa, Atholi (Paddar), Chatru and Kishtwar tehsils and is the largest district after Leh and Kargil districts in Jammu & Kashmir State so far as area is concerned. It has an area of 8,724 Sq. Kms out of the total area of 26,293 Sq. Kms of Jammu division which comes to about one third of its area. It is one half of Kashmir division having an area of 15,853 Sq. Kms. The successive governments never thought about its development but step motherly treatment was meted out to it. Thus resentment brewed all over the erstwhile tehsil against the governments of the time.

### College Agitation of 1969 A.D.

In the year 1969 A.D. people of Kishtwar gave vent to their pent up feelings. They resorted to a strong agitation for the opening of a Degree College at Kishtwar. From 1947 to 1977 A.D.



the State Council of Ministers was not represented by any MLA from Kishtwar who would have fought for her rightful claim. The people of Kishtwar had no other alternative but to resort to agitation. The students came out on streets and demanded for the opening of a Degree College at Kishtwar. They resorted to strikes, raised slogans and boycotted their classes for a long time. It spread in the suburban areas also and, by and by, to far off places in the tehsil. People of Kishtwar irrespective of caste, colour and creed backed up the agitation. Shopkeepers closed their shops and gave full support to the agitating students. G.M. Saddiq, Chief Minister J&K State, visited Kishtwar in the summer of 1969 A.D. Students put forth their demand of opening of a Degree College at Kishtwar. Public Kishwar fully supported the demand in the public meeting presided by the CM but he turned down the demand and all the hopes of the people were dashed to the ground.

### **College Agitation of 1974**

The agitation for opening of a Degree College at Kishtwar was again revived in 1974 A.D. The students of local schools came out on streets and the schools remained closed for more than a month. There were band calls off and on and the work in Govt. offices got paralysed. The students organised processions and passed through the streets of the town. Soon the agitation mustered full public support and sympathy. The agitation gained a tremendous impetus. All the social, religious and political leaders joined the agitation. It began to be led by senior social and political leaders like Jat Ram Aryan, Ghulam Hassan Arman, Man Mohan Gupta, Sewa Ram Parihar and many others. Apart from processions, public rallies and meetings the students started hunger strikes which boosted the morale of the agitators, gave it a momentum and highlighted it beyond Kishtwar. The leaders of various organisations and political parties from outside Kishtwar visited Kishtwar town and displayed their solidarity with the agitating masses of this place. They fully supported their genuine demand.



### **Police Firing of 13<sup>th</sup> September 1974**

On 13<sup>th</sup> Sept., 1974 A.D., when people of Kishwar took out a procession from tehsil office towards Bus Stands, the mob turned violent. The police resorted to indiscriminate firing. Four youth of Kishtwar namely Ravinder Kumar Gupta S/o Dhani Ram Gupta of Kishtwar town. Gian Chand Bhagat S/o Sulla Ram of Nagini Kishtwar, Mohd. Iqbal Zerger son of Abdul Rashid Zerger of Kishtwar town and Abdul Kabir S/o Saja Begum of Kishtwar town fell victims to the bullets of the police firing. Bishrup Sharma of Panditgam, Girdhari Lal of Kishtwar town and Riaz Ahamed Zerger S/o Nishat Kishwari were among the injured. They were shifted to Medical College Hospital Jammu for better treatment. Girdhari Lal had to get his legs amputated which rendered him invalid for the rest of his life.

This gory and ghastly incident left entire Kishtwar aggrieved and agonized. The dead bodies were cremated and buried amidst heart- rending screams near Boys Higher Secondary School Kishtwar now called "Shaheedi Mazaar". Thousands of people joined the funeral procession, raised anti-govt. slogans and performed last rites of the martyrs. It sent shock waves throughout Jammu division. There was uproar in the state Legislative Assembly. Social and political leaders visited Kishtwar at this critical juncture to soothe the sorrows of the people and expressed their solidarity with them. The agitation did not stop here. Now another demand for holding judicial enquiry of police firing was put forth by the agitators.

### **Representatives Invited to Srinagar**

In October, 1974 the govt. headed by Syed Mir Qasim invited the representatives of Kishtwar to Srinagar for talks in order to settle the issue. The delegation of people comprised Bashir Ahmed Kichloo, Ghulam Nabi Malik, Seva Ram Parihar, Man Mohan Gupta, Ghulam Haider Sheikh, Murli Lal Bhandari, Ashok Kumar Parihar, Salig Ram Bhagat of Saroor, Abdul Gani of Sangram Bhata and Ghulam Nabi Lone of Bagwan Mohella. It was agreed



upon in the meeting that the Govt. would establish a Job Oriented College at Kishtwar. A press release in this respect was also issued. The Govt. deputed some officers of Education Department to Kishtwar for an on the spot assessment of the requirements and infrastructure needed for such a college. However, the commitment was never implemented and the govt. backed out of its promise.

### **Appointment of Enquiry Commission**

Meanwhile, Govt. appointed One Man Enquiry Commission headed by Justice Janki Nanth Wazir, retired Chief Justice of High court, for investigation of the firing episode of 13<sup>th</sup> Sept., 1974. The commission, however, could not fulfil the aspirations of the people which shattered their hopes and justice was denied to them. On 25<sup>th</sup> February, 1975 Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah was sworn in as Chief Minister of J&K State. During his early period there were regional tensions and frequent agitations which led to resentment and student agitations in various districts of Jammu division against the discrimination meted out to the people of this division. In order to subside the public anger the Govt. appointed Sikri Commission.

### **District Agitation Started**

On June 13, 1981 A.D. 'Kishtwar Front', a united party which included all hues and shades irrespective of their political affiliations, was formed which was headed by Ghulam Hassan Arman. The College agitation took a new turn and demand for raising the status of Kishtwar to district level was included in the agitation. This district demand gave new impetus to the agitation. People whole heartedly supported the demand. On January 17, 1982 a youth Mohd Iqbal Zerger of Kishtwar town fell victim to the bullets of police firing in the main bazaar. Another youth Rajesh Sharma S/o Sham Lal of Kishtwar town sustained severe injuries in the police firing; There was much resentment and tension in the town. The Govt. imposed 'Police Raj' on Kishtwar and M.A. Nomani, DIG police, was appointed as administrator



for six months soon after the firing episode. He, however, was adamant to suppress and curb the agitation by harsh and inhuman methods. On 6<sup>th</sup> February, 1982 police arrested several Kishtwar front leaders and tortured them. The ruling party people were also tortured on fabricated charges and put to great inconvenience and trouble. This action of the police administrator was greatly resented by the people who lodged complaints against Nomani. A deputation of few leaders was sent to the Chief Minister who apprised him of the inhuman treatment meted out by the administrator. He was immediately called back. Thus the much resented and hated 'Police Raj' ended and people heaved a sigh of relief.

### **Appointment of Wazir Commission**

Sheikh Govt. appointed Wazir Commission on 12<sup>th</sup> Nov., 1981 for justifying the demand of raising the status of Tehsil Kishtwar to district level with Justice Janki Nath Wazir, retired Chief Justice High Court, as its Chairman. It started functioning in July, 1982 and presented its report in December, 1983 to Dr. Farooq Abdullah, the new Chief Minister of the state. The commission, among other things, recommended the creation of three districts of Kishtwar, Samba, and Reasi in Jammu division and Bandipur in Kashmir division. The commission found that the demand of upgrading tehsil Kishtwar to district level was justified on the basis of area, population, terrain, degree of backwardness, incidence of natural calamities and acute need of its development as a drought prone area. The commission also recommended the creation of three tehsils of Marwa, Paddar and Chatru out of the existing tehsil Kishtwar. Dr. Farooq Abdullah visited Kishtwar on April 24, 1984 and announced for the upgrading of tehsil Kishtwar to district level in his public address. However, the recommendations of the commission were not accepted. The new Chief Minister G.M. Shah upgraded High Schools of Marwa, Warwan, Dachhan, Paddar and Janglwar in 1985 A.D. The demand of opening of a Degree College at Kishtwar and conferring district status to Kishtwar did not find favour even at his hands. No



commission had been appointed for raising the status of Badgam, Kupwara and Pulwama to district status in Kashmir division, Kargil in Ladakh division and Rajouri in Jammu division. Even Gundoo, Thathri and Banihal Tehsils were carved out of Bhaderwah, Doda and Ramban tehsils without the recommendation of any commission in 1981 A.D. However, to sabotage the agitation in Kishtwar Wazir Commission was appointed.

### **Opening of Degree College at Kishtwar**

Governor Jag Mohan, during Governor's rule, visited Kishtwar on May 23, 1986. He went round the town, visited I.T.I. complex and Higher Secondary School Boys campus, and collected full information about the educational standard of this place and the accommodation problem of the educational institutions. In his public address at Dak Bungalow Kishtwar he made an announcement that an Arts Degree College will be opened at Kishtwar from the current session. It was decided that the college will start functioning in Higher Secondary School Boys under shift system for the time being. Thus Governor Jag Mohan conceded one of the public demands. People lauded this action of the the Governor. The Governor's Rule ended on 7<sup>th</sup> Nov., 1986 and Dr. Farooq Abdullah again assumed the charge of the office of Chief Minister J&K State. He backed out of his promise and commitment. The step motherly treatment meted out to the people of Kishtwar continued unabatedly. In the year 1989 terrorist activities started infiltrating into Kashmir valley which took an ugly turn in January, 1990 and Farooq Abdullah had to resign. Governor's rule was clamped. The demands of the people of Kishtwar were put on the back burner. The whole attention of the govt. was diverted towards curbing terrorism. Kishtwar witnessed many upheavals during this period. The demand of raising the status of Kishtwar to district level together with the developmental activities got a great set back. However, Governor's rule ended on 9<sup>th</sup> September, 1996. Dr. Farooq Abdullah again came to power. He was sworn in as C.M. on the same day. Militancy started declining. Developmental works were again



revived. Dr. Farooq Abdullah announced for the opening of B.Ed. College (College of Education) in Kishtwar in private sector. Accordingly, it was established in Islamia Faridia Higher Secondary School campus.

### **Revival of Demand for District Status**

The demand for upgrading tehsil Kishtwar to district level again got a fillip and the people of Kishtwar raised this demand in almost all the public platforms and meetings. Dr. Farooq Abdullah attended the 4<sup>th</sup> day death ceremony of Bashir Ahmed Kichloo, former Cabinet Minister of his Council of Ministers, on 29<sup>th</sup> August, 2001 in Islamica Faridia H.S. School Kishtwar which was largely attended by the public. During the course of condolence meeting when his attention was drawn towards the fact that one of his (B.A. Kichloo's) dreams, which remained unfulfilled, was conferring of district status to Kishtwar. He was apprised of the factors which qualified for this demand. He was convinced and made an announcement that Kishtwar would get district status soon after elections. However, in the Legislative Assembly elections of Oct., 2002 his party could not get the majority and Mufti Mohd Syeed of P.D.P. became the Chief Minister of Coalition Govt. supported by congress, P.D.F and Parther's party. This gave a great set back to the demand.

### **Mufti Mohd. Syeed Averse to the Demand**

Mufti visited Kishtwar two three times. On one of his visits a public meeting was held on 30.06.2004 in the Prade Ground. Leaders of congress and P.D.P. raised the demand for conferring district status to Kishtwar, but, instead of conceding the demand, he announced for upgrading S.D. Hospital Kishtwar to District Hospital which, however, has not matured so far. Next day morning a deputation of all parties under the auspices of Kishtwar Development Forum called on the C.M. in the Chenab Bhawan and presented a memorandum for conferring district status to Kishtwar. The deputation consisted of Sajjad Ahmed Kichloo M.L.A. Kishtwar, Brij Mohan Sharma MLC, Dr. B.A. Mintoo,



Mohd Abdullah Malik, Madan Lal Gupta, Brij Mohan Sharma, Man Mohan Gupta, Ashok Kumar Sharma, Jagdish Raj Aryan, Chuni Lal Parihar, Jugal Bhandari, D.C. Sharma etc. Shri G. N. Azad M.P., G.M. Saroori Chairman Social Welfare Board, Mohd Sharief Niaz MLA., Sudershan Sharma Advocate, Shakir Hussain Siddiqui, Gh.Haider Sheikh and few others were also present in the meeting. The secretary of the Forum projected the demand in a befitting manner but it had no effect on the C.M. He simply replied that the demand will be looked into. In fact it was a denial on his part. The demand was again raised in the state Legislative Assembly by M.L.A Kishtwar but no assurance was given by the Govt.

### **Kishtwar Sure to Get District Status**

When Sh. G.N. Azad was sworn in as Chief Minister of J&K State on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2005, hopes were again rekindled and people of Kishtwar looked forward for the happiest moment when Mr. Azad would announce about conferring of district status to Kishtwar as envisaged in the Common Minimum Programme of the Coalition Govt. It was only on March 20, 2006 when the Hon'ble C.M. declared in the Legislative Assembly that Kishtwar was sure to get district status. A news item appeared in the Daily Excelsior dated 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2006 which says, "March 20, to the jubilation of N.C., M.L.A. from Kishtwar Sajjad Ahamad Kichloo, Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad today declared in the Assembly that Kishtwar is sure to get the district status. You shouldn't worry. Kishtwar is the largest tehsil in India. It will surely get the district status Mr. Azad told Mr. Kichloo in the assembly while replying to the grants of Home and G.A.D. Several N.C. M.L.A.'s were seen congratulating Mr. Kichloo following announcement of the Chief Minister."

### **Kishtwar Tehsil Approved For District Status**

One fine morning on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2006, to the surprise of all, C.M. hurriedly called his Cabinet meeting in Jammu and approved the creation of 8 new districts of Kishtwar, Reasi, Samba and

hilly district Ramban in Jammu division and Bandipur, Kulgam, Ganderbal and hilly district Shopian in Kashmir division. Marwa, Paddar and Chatru tehsils had already been carved out of Kishtwar tehsil by Multi Govt. during his visit in 2004 but formal sanction was awaited. Azad Govt. approved only Atholi tehsil (Paddar) on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2006. Thus the long pending demand of the people of Kishtwar was conceded and people expressed their gratitude and were highly thankful to Mr. Azad for this great favour. He fulfilled his commitment. The district started functioning from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2007.

**Obedience, readiness and love for the cause**

**If you have these three,  
nothing can hold you back.**



## Achievements of Kishtwar Development Forum

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### Backwardness of Kishtwar

Kishtwar, the largest tehsil, now split in four tehsils of Marwa, Atholi Paddar, Chatru and Kishtwar with district status to Kishtwar from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2007 had ever since the dawn of independence been ignored in every field of developmental activities. Till this time it was holding the position of a tehsil of Doda district. In the year 2005 three new tehsils of Marwa, Paddar and Chatru were carved out of Kishtwar tehsil by Mufti Government by internal arrangement but no approval was given by his government for it. The total area of Kishtwar is approximately 7,824 Sq. kms including forest area. It was the largest tehsil in Jammu and Kashmir divisions and will still be the largest district after Leh and Kargil districts of Ladhakh division so far as area is concerned. It stands at number three position. The population of erstwhile Kishtwar tehsil as per census 2001 was 1,92,009 which may have gone to 2,25,420 on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2006 as per 29.04% decadal growth rate. In spite of all these factors nobody tried to solve the problems with which the people of this newly created district have been confronted. It lags behind in every field like literacy rate, economic condition, road connectivity, educational facilities and faces acute shortage of drinking water.

### **Augmentation of KNWSS.**

Kishtwar town and Mandal area around it had been reeling under acute shortage of drinking water for the last so many years. An agreement for augmentation of Kishtwar Naigad Water Supply Scheme (KNWSS) had been signed by the state Govt. representative D.C. Doda and General Manager Dul Hasti Power Project in presence of Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Chief Minister J&K State, during his visit to Kishtwar in the year 2001 but this problem could not be solved. A huge amount was sanctioned by the state Govt. for it. It helped in providing about 3" to 5" water which was quite insufficient in view of the growing need of drinking water to the people of Kishtwar plateau. This, too, had been damaged at places by the people on way to Kishtwar. The earlier source of drinking water from Godrashnag had fallen too short to suffice the present need of the people of Kishtwar town and Mandal area around it. The dry rainy season and change in weather conditions during past several winter months added fuel to the fire. For years together there was drought like condition in Kishtwar. All the springs in Mandal area had dried up and there was no possibility of bringing more water from any other source because of shortage of funds. Tankers, too, had been engaged for supply of drinking water which proved faulty and cumbersome.

### **Formation of Kishtwar Development Forum**

Sajjad Ahamad Kichloo, son of Bashir Ahmad Kichloo, former Cabinet Minister in Dr. Farooq Abdullah's council of Ministers, was elected Member Legislative Assembly (M.L.A.) in Oct. 2002 elections on N.C. ticket. Soon after taking oath as MLA Kishtwar he embarked upon the problem of shortage of drinking water. He convened a meeting of prominent citizens of Kishtwar, irrespective of caste, colour, creed and political affiliations on 15<sup>th</sup> Dec., 2002 in the Dak Bungalow Kishtwar to discuss about the crisis arisen out of acute shortage of drinking water faced by the people of Kishtwar plateau. A Mobilization Committee was framed. The meeting of this committee was convened by Mr. Hamdani S.D.M. Kishtwar on 18-12-2002 for generating funds and making further



programme to tide over the crisis. In the first instance Sajjad Ahmad Kichloo sanctioned Rs. 25 lakh out of his Constituency Development Fund (C.D.F.) and announced that a sum of rupees one crore had been sanctioned by the state government for this purpose out of additionality meant for Kishtwar. The Mobilization Committee unanimously resolved that a delegation of prominent citizens of Kishtwar, rising above party affiliations, will go to Jammu and New Delhi under the leadership of S.A. Kichloo M.L.A. Kishtwar for generating more funds for augmentation of K.N.W.S.S. The members so elected had to meet at Jammu on 23-12-2002 for onward journey. The delegation was lucky enough to meet Mr. G.N. Azad, M.P and president Pradesh Congress Committee J&K at Jammu on 23-12-2002 in the evening who happened to visit Jammu on that day. The delegation comprised S.A. Kichloo M.L.A. Kishtwar, G.M. Saroori M.L.A. Inderwal, Brij Mohan Sharma M.L.C., Dr. B.A. Mintoo, S.N. Sharma, D.C. Sharma, J.R. Aryan, Tanveer Ahamed Kichloo, Jugal Kishore Bhandari, Madan Lal Gupta, Shokat Ali Najar, Brij Lal Sharma, Ghulam Hassan Mir, Mushtaq Ahamad Hap, Madan Lal Gupta, Man Mohan Gupta, Brij Mohan Sharma, Ghulam Mohd. Ganie, Jewan Lal Sharma and many others. The delegation put forth its demand of generating funds for K.N.W.S.S. Azad Sahib was kind enough to announce rupees 25 lac as 1st instalment out of his M.P.L.A.D.S. for this purpose. He was also the source of inspiration for establishing a Forum for the development of Kishtwar. Thus the name Kishtwar Development Forum Kishtwar emerged. Sh. S.A. Kichloo was unanimously elected as its president and D.C. Sharma as its general secretary. All other senior citizens and activists of various organizations became its members.

### **Delegation Proceeds to New Delhi**

From Jammu the delegation comprising S.A. Kichloo M.L.A., Brij Mohan Sharma M.L.C., Dr. B.A. Mintoo, Man Mohan Gupta, J.R. Aryan, S.N. Sharma, Madan Lal Gupta, Brij Mohan Sharma, and D.C. Sharma proceeded to New Delhi and called on Hon'ble



Minister of state for Defence Chaman Lal Gupta, Hon'ble Union Minister for Rural Development Shanta Kumar and Hon'ble M.P. and President National conference J&K Omar Abdullah on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> December, 2002 in New Delhi and got an assurance of providing funds for augmentation of K.N.W.S.S. to the tune of rupees twenty five lakh out of his M.P.L.A.D.S., rupees two crore out of Rural Development funds and rupees 25 lakh out of Dr. Farooq Abdullah's M.P.L.A.D.S. respectively. This gave a great boost to the scheme and encouragement to the delegation. It returned triumphantly to Kishtwar. The people of Kishtwar lauded the role of the delegation. The leading news papers of J&K state carried the press release issued in this connection on the front pages in bold letters.

### **Monitoring Committee Constituted**

District Development Commissioner Doda, by his order No: DDC/PHE-Corsp/9448-50 dated 3-2-2003, constituted a Monitoring Committee of K.D.F. with SA Kichloo MLA Kishtwar as its Chairman and Farooq Ahamed Siddiqui, Vinod Kumar Bhandari, Chuni Lal Parihar, J.R. Aryan, Mohd Aslam Dev, Rajinder Singh Shan, Abdul Subhan Kichloo, Prehlad Bhagat, Rajinder Kumar Sen, Shabir Ahamad Kamal, Akhshay Kumar Sharma, Ashok Kumar Sharma, Imtiaz Ahamad Zerger, Zahid Hussain Sheikh, Mushtaq Ahamad Hap, as its members. However, D.D.C. Doda added some more members vide his order No. D.D.C./P.H.E./N/10092 dated 24-02-2003 in the committee. They comprised G.H. Sheikh, Shokat Ali Najar, Gh. Mohd Ganie and Mohd. Aslam Saroori. The committee had to look after the working of P.H.E. personnel engaged for K.N.W.S.S.

### **K.D.F. Called on J.P. Associates**

A deputation of the Forum called on Sameer Gaur Director J.P. Associates in the office chamber of Chief of the Project on 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2003 and demanded that the Firm may provide 8" dia pipes for K.N.W.S.S. The director agreed to provide 12 km length of pipes to the Forum and will also incur all the expenditure



required for laying of pipes. However, the Firm could lay only 4.5 Km length of pipes. In the meanwhile more funds were sanctioned by the government and the work continued unabatedly.

### **Delegation Proceeds Again to New Delhi**

A delegation of K.D.F. comprising Dr. B.A. Mintoo, S.N. Sharma, C.L. Parihar, Saroop Chand Parihar, Jag Dev Sharma, Abdul Subhan Kichloo, Rajinder Kumar Sen, Kartar Singh Rathore and D.C. Sharma under the leadership of S.A. Kichloo, president of the Forum, again proceeded to New Delhi and called on Sh. G.N. Azad M.P. and president P.C.C. J&K, Sh. Chaman Lal Gupta Defence Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah M P's on 11-04-2003 and was successful in collecting sanction orders of the funds to the tune of Rs. 25 lakh, Rs. 20 lakh and Rs. 25 lakh respectively from them as first instalment of their commitments for handing over to D.D.C. Doda. This time the delegation also called on Abdul Majid Wani M.O.S. Housing and Urban Development J&K in Kashmir Bhawan New Delhi who happened to be there on that day. He was apprised of the problems with which Kishtwar town and Mandal area around it are confronted. He assured that the problems would be solved. The agreement between the delegation and M.O.S. for implementation consisted of the following demands.

1. To depute a team of experts for survey of drainage and sewerage system of Kishtwar town for recommending remedial measures.
2. To construct Doda District Bhawan at Jammu for providing boarding and lodging facilities to the people of Doda district.
3. To construct a housing colony at Kishtwar for poor people.
4. To construct a municipal complex at Kishtwar.
5. To provide more vehicles to the Town Area Committee Kishtwar.
6. To increase the strength of scavengers.

7. To give the status of Notified Area to Atholi/Gulabgarh Paddar.
8. To provide more street lights to the town.
9. To raise the status of Town Area Committee Kishtwar to Municipal council.

Accordingly, Chief Town planner Jammu visited Kishtwar for locating site for housing colony and preparation of a comprehensive town plan. Town plan of all this is still awaited

### **Work of Laying Pipes Started**

The work of laying 8" dia pipes on Kishtwar Naigad Water Supply Scheme started in right earnest. A platform started to be constructed along the old route. The total length of the scheme measures 32 kms. There appeared major hurdles in its execution. Some people with vested interests were opposed to the laying of pipes. The bottlenecks were, however, removed but the work got delayed. The Forum raised other problems and issues relating to the development of Kishtwar also with the concerned authorities.

### **KDF Pursues its Demands**

The general body of the Forum resolved in its meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2003 that Hon'ble Chief Minister should be approached for conferring district status to Kishtwar. He was also requested to solve the problems of Sub Divisional Hospital and Degree College Kishtwar. The resolution was faxed to Hon'ble C.M. Mufti Mohd Syeed. A charter of demands was also submitted to him for favourable action. However, nothing came out of all such efforts.

### **Deputation Called on D.D.C. Doda**

A Deputation of the Forum called on D.D.C. Doda on July 2, 2003 under the leadership of its president. The Forum impressed upon him to create a Sub-Division of P.H.E. for accelerating the work on K.N.W.S.S. Many other problems of local Higher Secondary Schools were also raised. D.D.C. assured the delegation that their demands will be considered and problems



faced by the people will be looked into for their solution, D.D.C. also released funds to Executive Engineer PHE Kishtwar for water supply scheme on this occasion. The delegation consisted of about 14 members of the Forum.

### **Forum Members Visit Ekhala**

On 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2003 some members of the Forum under the leadership of its president S.A. Kichloo visited Ekhala and held a meeting with Chief Engineer N.H.P.C., D.F.O. Marwa, S.D.M. Kishtwar and other officials for facilitating the problem of handing over 8 km stretch of road from Patimhal to Ekhala to N.H.P.C. On the spot decisions were taken for further action and implementation. The members who took part in the deliberations were Dr. B.A. Mintoo, Adbul Subhan Kichloo, Brij Lal Sharma, Farooq Ahamed Bhat, Jugal Kishore Bhandari, Madan Lal Gupta, D.C. Sharma and local surpanches.

### **K.D.F. Deputation calls on Gen. Manager N.H.P.C.**

A deputation of K.D.F. called on S.C. Gupta, Gen. Manager N.H.P.C. on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2003 and presented a Charter of demands for approval of a special package for the development of Kishtwar, The demands included sewerage and drainage of Kishtwar town and Mandal area around it, augmentation of drinking water supply scheme, beautification of Sarkut pond, installation of flood lights in the town, construction of a block of wards in S.D.H. Kishtwar for indoor patients and beautification of Char Chinari in the Chowgan. General Manager agreed to bring 6" dia water for the people of Kishtwar from the end point of Dul Hasti project. He also agreed to execute a part of the town plan, The work on laying out a park at Char Chinari was started by N.H.P.C. in March, 2006 but due to some opposition from an unknown quarter the work was abandoned although some amount had been spent on it. This gave a set back to the development of the Chowgan. N.H.P.C. has not come out with any special gift for Kishtwar as is done at other places. People still wait that N.H.P.C. would ultimately fulfill its commitment.



### **K.D.F. Inspects Work in Dool Area**

The Forum visited the alignment site of K.N.W.S.S. in Dool area on 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2003. It had to travel about twelve kms on foot in steep hilly area. The work of fitting of 8" dia pipes was in progress. Only about two km length of the alignment site had been left incomplete. By laying pipes in this portion about 21 km length of the scheme will be completed. The team consisted of S.A. Kichloo President of the Forum, Dr. B.A. Mintoo, G.R. Hamal, Brij Lal Sharma, Chuni Lal Parihar, S.N. Sharma, Rajinder Kumar Sen, Rajinder Kumar Wazir, Abdul Subhan Kichloo, D.C. Shama and Farooq Bhat. Naib Tehsilder Dool, Patwari concerned, A.E.E. and J.E. Public Health Engineering, local leaders and sarpanches also accompanied M.L.A. Kishtwar. Later on, the Executive Engineer P.H.E. Kishtwar was apprised of the shortcomings and stressed upon him to remove the bottlenecks.

### **Chief Minister's Visit to Kishtwar**

Chief Minister Mufti Mohd Sayeed visited Kishtwar on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2004. A deputation of K.D.F. led by its president S.A. Kichloo M.L.A. Kishtwar called on him at Chenabnagar and projected its sole demand of raising the status of Kishtwar to district level. All the factors and claims that qualified Kishtwar for district status were narrated one by one. The demand was supported by everyone present there. But C.M. did not budge even an inch and left the meeting hall with words "We will think about it". The deputation comprised Dr. B.A. Mintoo, Mohd Abdullah Malik, J.R. Aryan, Brij Mohan Sharma M.L.C., Ashok Kumar Sharma, Madan Lal Gupta, Chuni Lal Parihar, Man Mohan Gupta, S.N. Shamra, Abdul Subhan Kichloo, Brij. Mohan Sharma and D.C. Sharma. Other leaders and workers present on this occasion were Sh. G.N. Azad, G.M. Saroori M.L.A., Sudershan Sharma Advocate, Ghulam Haider Sheikh, Pyare Lal Shan, Jugal Kishore Bahndari, Shakir Ahamad Siddique, Gh. Mohd Ganie, Mushtaq Ahamad Hap, Ghulam Hassan Mir. On the previous night C.M. made commitment of allocating Rs. 80 lakh for K.N.W.S.S. so that work of laying pipes may not suffer.



**K.D.F. Staged a Dharna**

Kishtwar Development Forum staged a dharna on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2004 in the premises of S.D.M. Kishtwar against the callous attitude of P.H.E. authorities. Kishtwar had been reeling under acute water crisis since long but the work on laying pipes had slow pace. There were forces who prevailed upon the authorities to go slow. People had been suffering but such forces had their own ulterior motives against the Forum. The dharna had a desired effect and it gave some impetus to the acceleration of work on the scheme.

**K.D.F. Called on G.M. N.H.P.C.**

K.D.F. under the leadership of S.A. Kichloo called on General Manager NHPC on 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2004 in his office chamber. The deputation comprised Dr. B.A. Mintoo, Khushi Ram Sen, S.N. Sharma, Ghulam Haider Sheikh, Abdul Kabir Gagroo, Jag Dev Sharma, Mohd Abass, D.C. Sharma and others. G.M. assured the deputation that 7 to 8 lakh gallons of water would be supplied daily to the people of Kishtwar and for the construction of a park at Char Chinari an amount of rupees 20 lakh had already been sanctioned. The contract for the construction of the park had already been assigned. The work was, however, stopped after some time although some portion of the work had been completed.

**Conferring of District Status to Kishtwar Demanded**

Kishtwar Development Forum unanimously resolved on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2005 that a charter of demands may be faxed to G.N. Azad Hon'ble Minister for Urban Development and Parliamentary Affairs New Delhi for his consideration and further action. The demands included conferring of district status to Kishtwar, establishing Jammu University Sub Campus at Kishtwar, approval of plan for augmentation of K.N.W.S.S., starting of construction work on Pakal- Dul and Bursar projects. A representation was also submitted to prof. Amitab Mattoo, Vice Chancellor Jammu University, on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2005 for establishing Jammu University Campus with post graduate classes and University Sub-Office at Kishtwar which he had promised during his visit to Kishtwar.

### **Azad Hailed as Chief Minister**

Sh. Ghulam Nabi Azad, son of the soil, was elected Chief Minister J&K State and assumed the charge on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2005. Kishtwar Development Forum hailed the election. When the delegation of K.D.F. had called on him at his New Delhi residence on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2003 and put forth the demand for conferring district status to Kishtwar, he had promised to concede the demand for which we had to wait for 2½ years more. As per agreement People Democratic Party had to share power with congress for three years term each and accordingly power had to be shifted to congress on 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov., 2005. The Forum was hopeful of getting a fair deal at the august hands of Azad Government. A charter of demands was submitted to Azad Sahib Hon'ble C.M.. Assurances were given for early solution of the demands. He also visited Kishtwar and announced in the public meeting that the grievances of the people of Kishtwar will be redressed.

### **Naigad Kishtwar Water Supply Scheme Completed**

The work on Naigad - Kishtwar Water Supply Scheme was completed on July, 2006 and about 7" water reached Kishtwar reservoirs. Without proper inauguration and funfair drinking water began to be supplied to the people of Kishtwar plateau. One of the greatest problems of Kishtwar was thus solved inspite of the hurdles put forth by some vested interests and that, too, only for getting the credit of this achievement without rendering any concrete help, co-operation and support.

### **Demands Pursued by K.D.F.**

Kishtwar Development Forum pursued the Charter of Demands already presented to Gen. Manger N.H.P.C., State Govt., Chief Minister, Vice Chancellor Jammu University etc. The demands raised were beautification of Sarkut pond, adoption and beautification of Chowgan and Qila, providing of flood lights to the town and Sub-District Hospital, Sewerage and Drainage of Kishtwar town, construction of roads from Gulabgarh Paddar to Machail



and Paitimhal to Dachhan, sanctioning of posts for newly upgraded High Schools and Higher Secondary Schools, establishing of Jammu University Campus at Kishtwar and Jammu University Sub-office at Kishtwar etc. In some cases the work had been taken in hand whereas Govt. had been pressurised for immediate redressal of the grievances of the people of Kishtwar. The credit of all this goes to Kishtwar Development Forum and its president Sajjad Ahamad Kichloo M.L.A. Kishtwar but for whose untiring efforts nothing would have been possible. The members of K.D.F. also rose to the occasion and rendered all possible help and co-operation in achieving all the targets.

### **Kishtwar Approved for District Status**

To the great joy and jubilation of the people of Kishtwar and Kishtwar Development Forum the demand for raising the status of tehsil Kishtwar to district level was conceded on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2006 when Hon'ble Chief Minister Gh. Nabi Azad, in a hurriedly called Cabinet meeting on this day, approved the creation of eight new districts including Kishtwar, Thus Kishtwar tehsil, with three tehsils of Marwa, Atholi Paddar and Chatru carved out of it, became Kishtwar district, The long cherished demand of the people of Kishtwar was accomplished. Kishtwar Development Forum and the people of Kishtwar expressed their whole hearted gratitude and thanks to Sh. G.N. Azad for this historic decision which made our dream come true. The district started functioning from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2007 as per decision. Sh. Shahid Anayatullah has been appointed as the first Deputy commissioner of Kishtwar and Sh. Riaz Ahamad Zerger as 1<sup>st</sup> Additional Deputy commissioner Revenue Kishtwar.

**Arise! Awake! And stop not  
Till the goal is reached.**

## **Dul Hasti Hydro Electric Power Project**

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Kishtwar has great potential for generating electricity over river Chandra Bhaga (Cenab) and its tributaries like river Marwa known as Mariev Sudher, Bhutnala in paddar, Naigad Nala in Nagseni, Chatru Nala etc, Many streams flow down from high altitudes and join the Chandra Bhaga. Thus the scope for generating electricity at various places over this river in Kishtwar district has widened. One of the mighty projects, Dul Hasti Hydro Electric Power Project, has been constructed over river Chandra Bhaga at Dul in Kishtwar district.

### **Salient Features of the project**

A high weir of 30 metres has been constructed over Chandra Bhaga river at Dul which is 15 kms from Kishtwar town. It is 200 metres below the Jeepable road.

It is a run of the river scheme.

A tunnel from Dul to Hasti, measuring 10.586 kms has been bored through which diverted water of river Chandra Bhaga joins again river Chandra Bhaga at Hasti. The diameter of the tunnel is 7.46 metres.

A power house has been constructed at Hasti which is about 15 kms from project headquarter at Chenabnagar in Kishtwar. It is 150 metres below the approach road.

The power house at Hasti has three turbines with a capacity of generating 390 mega watt power, each turbine with a capacity of 130 MW power.



The construction of this project took about 25 years for completion at a cost of Rupees 5,228 crore. The construction of the project started in 1981 A.D. and its foundation stone was laid by Indira Gandhi, P.M. of India on 15<sup>th</sup> April, 1983. The delay in construction of the project caused the enhancement of its cost from Rs. 1500 crore to Rs. 5000 crore.

As per agreement J&K state government is entitled to 12% free power from the project as royalty.

### **History of the Project**

It was way back in seventies when the concept of this project originated as a result of C.W.C.S. investigations. Accordingly it submitted project report to Govt. of India that construction of Dul Hasti project over river Chandra Bhaga (Chenab) at Dul is feasible. The river has vast water power potential which when harnessed there will be tremendous scope for generation of cheap electricity. The report earmarked three projects of Dul Hasti, pakal Dul and Bursar for construction. These projects had to generate 390 MW, 1000 M.W. and 1020 M.W. power respectively. Dul Hasti had to be constructed in the 1<sup>st</sup> phase,

### **Laying of Foundation Stone of Dul Hasti Project**

The foundation stone of Dul Hasti project was laid on 15<sup>th</sup> April, 1983 by Indira Gandhi Prime Minister of India. She flew to Kishtwar in a helicopter and after her public address in the Chowgan she straight away went to Shalimar and laid the foundation stone of the project at the specified place. She spoke highly of Om Mehta, a minister in her council of ministers and son of the soil, who could not accompany her because of his ailing health. In fact, it was Om Mehta who proved to be the source of inspiration behind all this. He prevailed upon the Govt. of India and got the project approved for construction.

### **Execution of Work on the Project**

The construction work on the project was started in September, 1989 by a French consortium Dumez-Sogea-Borie-Sae (D.S.B.)

whom the work of construction was entrusted. It was proposed to complete the work by 1994. The most modern machinery was imported from abroad for this project. Thousands of unemployed youth were engaged in it. The quarters for staff were constructed at a place named Chenab Nagar later on. In 1991 a Tunnel Boring Machine (T.B.M.) was brought from abroad and the boring work started with the help of this T.B.M. It had bored only about 2702 metres when water gushed out of the tunnel and the machine was submerged in it. It took about 4 months to drain out water from the tunnel. The firm could not execute work with the T.B.M. and lost interest in it. It was now on the look out for some excuse to abandon the work.

### **Kidnapping of French Engineer**

On October 14, 1991 French Engineer Antonio Silva, working with D.S.B. at Dul, was kidnapped by militants near Banjwar while on his way back from Dul to Kishtwar. He was, however, released on January 13, 1992. This incident gave a great set back to the tunnel boring process of Dul Hasti project. This became the excuse to D.S.B. for abandoning the work. However, it was a time when militancy was at its peak and terrorists struck at various places. People were terrified. This became a great cause for stand still of developmental works and more so of Dal Hasti project. When Union Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Ghulam Nabi Azad, who hails from Bhalesa of Doda district and is presently Chief Minister J&K state, paid a visit to Kishtwar on June 20, 1994, people stressed upon him for the need of restoring normalcy and resuming work on Dul Hasti project.

### **Fate of Dul Hasti project**

The much cherished Dul Hasti Hydro-Electric project Kishtwar received a set back when the French consortium finally decided to pull out of it reportedly on security reasons. In December, 1994 India and France resolved the dead lock over the project and signed an agreement to pave way for resuming construction work on the project. This agreement was signed between N.H.P.C.



and C.E.G.E.L.E.C. (a French consortium). The Memorandum of understanding was signed on June 29, 1994 in Paris under the auspices of the two governments. However, the consortium could not go ahead. There was no progress in the construction work.

### **Construction Work Allotted to J.P. Associates**

On 14<sup>th</sup> April 1997 the construction work of the project was allotted to M/s J.P. Associates. The firm started its work in right earnest. It had to run into rough weather several times. There were strikes at intervals from workers which also hampered the work. A large number of workers, about 1300, had to be ousted after paying huge amounts. Every ousted worker got five times of his salary in lump sum besides other perks laid down in their agreements and offered by J.P. Associates.

On one fine morning of 27<sup>th</sup> August, 2003 the tunnel got the day light. Both sides, from Dul side and Hasti side, met each other on this day. This was a gala day for N.H.P.C. and J.P. Associates whose untiring efforts bore fruit. It took further more than 3½ years before the tunnel became fit for charging viz diverting of water through tunnel to power house. The 2<sup>nd</sup> unit was put on spinning successfully on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2007, 1<sup>st</sup> unit on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2007 and 3<sup>rd</sup> unit on 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2007. The grid station has been constructed at Kishenpur in Udhampur district. Power has started being sent to the grid station Kishanpur through 400 K.V. single circuit transmission line. It is a great achievement.

### **Dul Hasti Hydel Project Dedicated to Nation**

The 390 M.W. Dul Hasti Power Project was ultimately dedicated to the nation on 26th April, 2008 by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. Dr. Man Mohan Singh in presence of State Governor, Chief Minister and Union and State Power Ministers.

**No great works can be done without sacrifice.**

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## Facts about Kishtwar District (As of now)

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1. When was Kishtwar District carved out of erstwhile Doda District? : 06-07-2006
2. Whence from Kishtwar district started functioning? : 01-04-2007
3. What is the area of Kishtwar district? : 7824 sq. Km.
4. What was the population of Kishtwar district on 01-01-2001 as per census 2001? : 1,92,009 souls
5. What was the scheduled caste population of Kishtwar as per census 2001? : 11,713 souls,  
Viz 6.2%
6. What was the scheduled tribe population of Kishtwar District as per census 2001? : 27,913 souls,  
: Viz 14.6%
7. What is the position of Kishtwar district in J&K? : No. 3
8. No. of largest districts in J&K state. : Leh 1<sup>st</sup> position  
Kargil 2<sup>nd</sup> position  
and Kishtwar  
3<sup>rd</sup> position
9. Which area has been covered by Kishtwar district? : Area of erstwhile  
Kishtwar tehsil.
10. Position of Kishtwar district in J&K Divisions : 1<sup>st</sup> position



11. What is the decadal growth rate : 29.04%  
of J&K?
12. What is the number of districts : 22  
in J&K?
13. Name the districts region wise
  - (a) Jammu Division— Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur, Poonch,  
Rajouri, Doda, Samba, Ramban,  
Reasi and Kishtwar.
  - (b) Kashmir Division— Srinagar, Anantnag, Baramulla,  
Badgam, Pulwama, Kupwara,  
Ganderbal, Bandipur, Kulgam  
and Shopian.
  - (c) Ladakh Division— Leh and Kargil.
14. What was the number of voters : Kishtwar Segment  
in Assembly elections 2002? 73,723  
Inderwal segment  
66,853
15. What is the number of constituencies in Kishtwar District? : 2
16. Give the name of two constituencies? : Kishtwar and  
Inderwal
17. Literacy rate of Kishtwar as per : 42.65%  
census 2001
18. What is the number of Revenue : 156  
villages?
19. What is the number of panchayats : 134  
in Kishtwar District?
20. Give the number of educational : 7  
blocks in Kishtwar.
21. Name the Education Blocks : Kishtwar, Drabshala,  
Nagseni, Chatru,  
Marwa, Warwan,  
Paddar.
22. What is the number of Rural : 8  
Development Blocks?
23. What is the number of Niabets in : 10  
Kishtwar?

24. What is the number of Qanoongo Circles? : 10
25. What is the number of Patwar Halqas in Kishtwar? : 41
26. Give the number of Tehsils in Kishtwar district : 4
27. Name the Tehsils of Kishrwar district : Kishtwar, Chatru, Marwa, Atholi-Paddar
28. What is the area of land under forests in Kishtwar? : 124.23 sq-miles
29. What is the number of High Schools in Kishtwar? : 17 (Boys), 2 (Girls)
30. What is the number of Higher Secondary Schools in Kishtwar district? : 12 (Boys), 2 (Girls)
31. What is the total number of Educational Institutions in Kishtwar district as on 30.11.2007? : 455
32. What is the total number of Sarva-shiksha Abhiyan and E.G.S, E.V.C? : 581
33. What is the number of Degree Colleges in Kishtwar district? : 1
34. When was 1<sup>st</sup> Primary School & Middle School opened in Kishtwar district? : 1900 A.D. & 1910 A.D. respectively
35. When was Primary and Middle School raised to High School Status? : 1922 A.D.
36. When was High School raised to the status of Multilateral Higher Secondary School? : 1958 A.D.
37. When was H.S.S. raised to status of 10+2 H.S.S.? : 1974 A.D.
38. Who conquered erstwhile Kishtwar State Raja? : Gulab Singh



39. When was erstwhile Kishtwar state: 1821 A.D.  
conquered?
40. Whence from name Kishtwar : 10<sup>th</sup> C.A.D.  
emerged?
41. Give various names of Kishtwar : Samarthgarh,  
since earliest times Goverdhansar,  
Mahakaligarh,  
Lohitmandal, Pohie,  
Cheerhar, Bhotnagar  
and Kishtwar.
42. When was Marwa annexed to : 1834 A.D.  
Kishtwar?
43. When was Paddar annexed to : 1836 A.D.  
Kishtwar?
44. Who founded the principality of : Deep Sen  
Marwa?
45. Who ruled Paddar before its : Local Ranas and  
annexation to Kishtwar? Chamba rulers
46. Name the villages of Warwan : Inshan, Afti, Gomeri,  
pargana kept after the names Basman, Margi,  
of the English people. Brayan
47. Name the first historic king of : Kahan Pal  
Kishtwar.
48. Who was the last ruler of : Mohd. Teg Singh  
Kishtwar?
49. Name the first converttee Muslim : Kirat Singh  
Raja of Kishtwar.
50. What is the height of Umasi La : 5340 Mts.  
or Baddhar pass
51. What is the height of Marbal : 3670 Mts.  
pass (Singpur pass)?
52. What is the height of Margan : 3810 Mts.  
pass (Ikpatran pass)?
53. What is the height of Synthan : 3784 Mts.  
pass?

54. Give the height of other passes
  - (a) Bhot Kol or Lanwilla pass : 4421 Mts.
  - (b) Nandmarg pass : 4110 Mts.
  - (c) Sickle Moon : 6575 Mts.
  - (d) Thunther : 5710 Mts.
  - (e) N'm Khun : 7135 Mts.
  - (f) Brahma-I : 6416 Mts.
  - (g) Brahma-II : 6110 Mts.
  - (h) Naginshero cliff : 4090 Mts.
  - (i) Piparan : 4070 Mts.
  - (j) Arjuna peak : 6200 Mts.
  - (k) Barnaj-I : 6100 Mts.
  - (l) Barnaj-II : 6290 Mts.
  - (m) Shiv Ling : 6000 Mts.
55. What is the length of river Chenab from its source to Akhnoor border? : 570 Kms.
56. What is the height of Kishtwar town above sea level? : 1634 Mts.
57. Name the earliest intellectual of Kishtwar? : Nagsen
58. Who wrote Milindo Panho? : Nagsen
59. Name the famous cash crop produced in Kishtwar. : Saffron
60. Name the costliest blue stone found in Paddar. : Sapphire
61. Where are hot springs found in Kishtwar? : Tatapani Paddar,  
Tatapani Renai  
Marwa, Puller  
Nagseni, Kiyar  
Dachhan
62. Who opened first govt. school in Kishtwar? : Maharaja Partap Singh
63. When was Doda-Kishtwar road thrown open for vehicular traffic? : 1962
64. Who was the first Union Minister from Kishtwar? : Om Mehta



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65. Who was the first Minister from Kishtwar in State Council of Ministers? : Bashir Ahamad Kichloo
  66. When was first College Agitation started? : 1969 A.D.
  67. When was Batote-Kishtwar road declared as National Highway 1B? : 1977 A.D.
  68. Who opened Degree College at Kishtwar Governor? : Jag Mohan
  69. When was Degree College opened at Kishtwar? : 1986 A.D.
  70. Name the women who played vital role in administration in Kishtwar. : Rani Vilas Maji and Anwar Dei
  71. Who was the first Member Parliament (M.P.) from Kishtwar? : Om Mehta
  72. Who was the first woman M.P. from Kishtwar? : Krishana Mehta
  73. Where are inscriptions found in Kishtwar? : In Sharda script at Saiya Draman Nagseni and Sirshi Dachhan.  
In Sanskrit at Zajnai Warwan.  
In Brahmi script on the ceiling of Bathastal cave.
  74. When was District Institute of Education (D.I.E.T.) opened at Kishtwar? : 1<sup>st</sup> Jan. 1979
  75. Where from does river Chandra Bhaga rise? : On the opposite side of Bara Lacha pass at a height of 5100 Mt. above sea level
  76. Where from does river Mariev Sudher (Marwa river) rise? : Saga glacier near Bhot Kol in Warwan pargana at a height of 4421 Mt. above sea level.

77. What was the name of Kishtwar during Mahabharata period? : Lohit Mandal
78. What is the name of last village of Warwan bordering Anantnag? : Sukhnai
79. What is the name of last village of Paddar bordering H.P.? : Tun
80. What is the area of Chowgan? : 520 Kanal
81. When was Dul Hasti project thrown open for spinning? : 7-4-2007
82. How many turbines are functioning in Dul Hasti project? : 3
83. Name the last descendant of Raja Kahan Pal. : Ghulam Ali, clerk in I.F HSS Kishtwar
84. Who wrote Sangeet Sangrah (a manuscript on music)? : Shri Vak
85. What is the distance from Kishtwar to Jammu? : 230 Kms.
86. On what day district agitation was started? : 13<sup>th</sup> June 1983
87. When was Islamia Faridia HSS established? : 1905 A.D.
88. When was Adarsh Balniketan HS established? : 1960 A.D.
89. When was Bharty Vidya Mandir HS established? : 1974 A.D.
90. When was Wazir commission appointed? : 12-11-1981
91. When was Wazir commission report presented to C.M.? : Dec. 1983
92. When was B.Ed. College established in private sector in Kishtwar? : 2001
93. When was Science subjects introduced in Degree college Kishtwar? : 2001
94. Give the distance of various places, from Kishtwar : 22 Kms.  
(a) To Dul Dam



- (b) To Sansari Jullah : 102 Kms.  
 (c) To Gulabgarh : 63.61 Kms.  
 (d) To Sinthan Top : 83 Kms.  
 (e) To Chingam : 40 Kms.  
 (f) To Batote : 110 Kms.  
 (g) To Srinagar : 283 Kms.  
 (h) To Nowpachi Marwa : 94 Kms.  
 (i) From Nowpachi to Marwan : 52 Kms.  
 top (Ikpatran pass) : 4267 Mts
95. On what height are Sapphire mines located? : 4267 Mts
96. When were Sapphire mines discovered? : 1881 A.D.
97. Give the areas of four tehsils of Kishtwar
- (a) Marwa : 872.8 sq. Kms.  
 (b) Atholi Paddar : 700.5 sq. Kms.  
 (c) Chatru : 761.12 sq. Kms.  
 (d) Kishtwar : 5490 sq. Kms.
98. What is the Sanskrit name of Chander Bhaga or Chenab? : Asikini
99. When was Dul Hasti Power Project dedicated to the nation? : 26-04-2008
100. Who dedicated the project to Nation? : Sh. Man Mohan Singh Prime Minister of India.

## Facts About Jammu and Kashmir State (As of Now)

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1. Who founded the J&K State : Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1846 A.D.
2. Location of the J&K State : 32°15' to 37°05' North Latitude  
72°35' to 83°20' East Longitude
3. Total Area of J&K State on 15/08/1947 : 2,22,236 sq. kms.
4. Total Area under J&K State at present : 1,01,387 sq. kms.
5. Percentage of Area : Jammu 19%  
Kashmir 11%  
Ladakh 71%
6. Area under Illegal Occupation of China : 37,555 sq. kms.
7. Area under Illegal Occupation of Pakistan : 78,114 sq. kms.
8. Area illegally gifted to China by Pakistan : 5,180 sq. kms.
9. Population of J&K as per census 2001 : 10,069,917  
Male = 5,300,574  
Female = 4,769,343
10. Sex ratio Females/1000 males : 900
11. Density of Population/sq. mtr. : 99
12. Rural population : 75.12%
13. Urban Population : 24.88%
14. Literacy Rate as per census 2001 : 54.46%  
(Male=65.75%  
Female=41.82%)



46. Pakistan waged 1st war in Kashmir: 1965 (2nd in 1971)
47. The Delhi Agreement was signed : 1952  
between J&K and Indian Govt.
48. Tashkant Declaration was made : 10th Jan., 1966  
between Prime Minister Lal Baha-  
dur Shastri of India and President  
Mohd. Ayub Khan of Pakistan
49. Shimla Agreement was signed : 3rd July, 1972  
between Indira Gandhi Prime  
Minister of India And Zulfikar  
Ali Bhutto President of Pakistan
50. Sheikh-Indira Accord was made  
in 1975.
51. Treaty of Amritsar was signed : 16th March, 1846  
between the British Govt. and  
Maharaja Gulab Singh of  
Jammu on
52. Treaty of Lahore was signed on : 09th March, 1846
53. Total No. of Constituencies : 87 (Jammu = 37,  
in J&K : Kashmir = 46,  
Ladakh=04)
54. Total No. of Voters in State : 63,76,872  
Assembly elections 2002
  - (a) Jammu : 32,00,559
  - (b) Kashmir : 29,93,636
  - (c) Ladakh : 1,82,677
  - Male Voters : 34,72,136
  - Female Voters : 29,04,736
55. Measurements :
 

One Bigha	=	4 Kanals
Two Bighas	=	1 Ghumaon or 8 Kanals
One Acre	=	4840 Yards
One Hectare	=	18.68 Kanals
One Chain	=	22 Yards
80 Chains	=	1 Mile or 1760 Yards
56. Languages Spoken in J&K : Urdu, Kashmiri, Dogri,  
Pahari, Ladakhi, Balti,  
Panjabi, Gojri, Dardi,  
Kishtwari, Bhaderwahi

57. Coldest Place in J&K : Drass (up to -60 degree in Winter)
58. Biggest Town in J&K : Anantnag
59. Biggest City in J&K : Srinagar (1730 Meter height.)
60. Deepest Lake in J&K : Manasbal (about 47 Feet deep)
61. Highest town in J&K : Leh (3522 Meter height.)
62. Highest Pass in J&K : Khardungla (5602 Meter height.)
63. Highest Peak in J&K (POK) : Nanga Parbat (8126 Meter height.)
64. Longest River : Sindh or Indus (2900 kms.)
65. Longest Highway : NH Srinagar to Leh (430 Km. In length.)
66. Mountain Passes in J&K State and their Height above Sea level:
- (a) Zojila Pass : 3559 Metres.
  - (b) Khardungla Pass : 5602 Metres.
  - (c) Banihal Pass : 2832 Metres.
  - (d) Pir Panjal Pass : 3494 Metres.
  - (e) Patnitop Pass : 2060 Metres.
  - (f) Barzil Pass : 4199 Metres.
  - (g) Jawhar Tunnel Pass : 2226 Metres.
  - (h) Karakoram Pass : 5575 Metres.
68. Names of Highest Peaks with their elevation:
- (a) Nanga Parbat(Divya Mir) : 8126 Metres.
  - (b) K2 or Godwin Austin : 8611 Metres.
  - (c) Harmukh : 5152 Metres.
  - (d) Mahadev : 3962 Metres.
  - (e) Konsarnag : 3901.44 Metres.
  - (f) Nunkhun : 7135 Metres.
69. Names of Distt. in J&K State.
- (a) Jammu Division:
    - (i) Jammu
    - (ii) Udhampur
    - (iii) Kathua
    - (iv) Poonch
    - (v) Rajouri
    - (vi) Doda



- (vii) Kishtwar  
(ix) Samba  
(b) Kashmir Division:  
    (i) Srinagar  
    (iii) Baramula  
    (v) Pulwama  
    (vii) Bandipur  
    (ix) Ganderbal  
(c) Ladakh Division:  
    (i) Leh  
    (ii) Kargil  
(viii) Ramban  
(x) Reasi  
(ii) Kupwara  
(iv) Budgam  
(vi) Anantnag  
(viii) Kulgam  
(x) Shopian
70. No. of Educational Institutions in J&K as on 23/03/2006.  
    (a) Primary Schools : 11365  
    (b) Middle Schools : 4618  
    (c) High Schools : 1035  
    (d) Higher Secondary Schools : 474
71. No. of Lok Sabha Constituencies : 06  
    in J&K  
    (i) Anantnag                      (ii) Baramula                      (iii) Srinagar  
    (iv) Jammu                      (v) Udhampur                      (vi) Ladakh
72. No. of Rajya Sabha Representatives : 04
73. Chief Minister of J&K State : Sh. Gulam Nabi Azad
74. Governor of J&K State : Retd. Gen. S.K. Sinha
75. Chief Justice High Court of J&K : Justice K.S. Radha Krishnan
76. 1st Chief Justice Of J&K High Court : Justice Sir Birjor Dalal
77. Speaker Legislative Assembly : Sh. Tara Chand
78. Chairman Legislative Council : Sh. Abdul Rashid Dar
79. Chairman Public Service Commission : Sh. Mohd. Shafi Pandit
80. Dy. Chief Minister J&K State : Sh. Muzaffar Hussain Beg
81. Finance Minister J&K State : Sh. Abdul Hamid Qara
82. Director General Police J&K State : Sh. Kuldeep Khoda
82. Highest Population as per decadal growth rate : Kupwara : 94.63%

83. Lowest Population as per : Kathua : 47.43%
84. decadal growth rate
85. Highest Literacy Rate : Jammu : 77%
86. Lowest Literacy Rate : Badgam : 42.50%
87. Scheduled Caste Population to : 7.6%
88. the total population of State
89. Scheduled Caste Population : 7,70,155
90. of the State
91. Scheduled Tribe Population to : 10.9%
92. the total population of State
93. Scheduled Tribe Population of : 11,05,979
94. the State
95. First Prime Minister of : Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah
96. J&K State
97. Last Prime Minister of : Shamas-ud-din
98. J&K State
99. First Chief Minister of : Ghulam Mohd. Sadiq
100. J&K State
101. Chief Secretary of J&K State : Sh. B.R. Kundal
102. Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin was : Badshah
103. Popularly Known as
104. Total no. of Employees in Civil : 1715
105. Secretariat on 24/01/2007
106. (a) Kashmir— Gazatted : 191; Non-Gazatted : 767
107. Class 4<sup>th</sup> : 256
108. (b) Jammu— Gazatted : 08; Non-Gazatted : 274
109. Class 4<sup>th</sup> : 107
110. (c) Ladakh— Total : 112
111. 96. Distance From North to : 640 Kms.
112. South in J&K
113. 97. Distance From East to West : 480 Kms.
114. in J&K
115. 98. Shankaracharya Hill Elevation : 2065 Metres
116. 99. Amar Nath Peak : 5279.40 Metres
117. 100. Amar Nath Cave : ~~3888~~ 3962 Metres
118. 101. First known king of Kashmir : Gonanda
119. (Satisara)



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102. Jammu University came in : 1969  
to being
103. State Official Language : Urdu
104. Name of States in Devigrith (Duggar Desh)
- |               |               |              |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| (i) Chamba    | (ii) Basohli  | (iii) Bhadu  |
| (iv) Mankot   | (v) Bindralta | (vi) Jasrota |
| (vii) Samba   | (viii) Jammu  | (ix) Chenani |
| (x) Bhaderwah | (xi) Kishtwar |              |
105. Employees in J&K State as on 22/03/2006 (Hind Samachar)
- |                                 |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Govt. Employees                 | : 2,73,508 |
| SPO's                           | : 23,000   |
| Public Sector Employees         | : 24,000   |
| Daily Wagers                    | : 20,000   |
| Total                           | : 3,50,000 |
| Home Deptt. Including Police,   | : 17,640   |
| Health and Medical Education    |            |
| Public Health Engineering (PHE) | : 15857    |
| Electricity                     | : 13846    |
106. Sitting Members of Parliament :
- (a) Lok Sabha:
- Sh. Omer Abdullah (NC) from Srinagar.
  - Sh. Choudhary Lal Singh (Cong.) from Udhampur.
  - Sh. Madan Lal Sharma (Cong.) from Jammu.
  - Sh. Abdul Rashid Shaheen (NC) from Baramullah.
  - Mtr. Mehbooba Mufti (PDP) from Anantnag.
  - Sh. Thupsen Chebung (Independent) from Ladakh.
- (b) Rajya Sabha:-
- Chaudhary Mohd. Aslam (Cong.)
  - Prof. Saif-ud-din Soz (Cong.)
  - Sh. Tara Singh Bajwa (PDP)
  - Dr. Farooq Abdullah (NC)
107. Who inaugurated country's longest contilever bridge 160 metre long at Akhnoor on River Chenab and on what date? : Dr. Man Mohan Singh P.M. of India on 25.4.2008

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## अभिनन्दन पत्र

माननीय दूनी चन्द शर्मा जी,

जम्मू इतिहास एवं संस्कृति संगम, त्रिकुटा साहित्य संगम कटड़ा (वैष्णो देवी), डोगरी साहित्य सभा पैथल, रचनाकार उधमपुर, स्वामी नित्यानन्द समार्क समिति पैथल उधमपुर के साहित्यकारों इतिहासवेत्ताओं, पुराविदों, संस्कृति के प्रति समर्पित शोधकर्ताओं, बुद्धिजीवियों एवं समाज की ओर से आपका हार्दिक अभिनन्दन करता हूँ। आपने अपने अमूल्य और शोधपरत ग्रंथ 'हिस्टरी एण्ड कल्चर ऑफ़ किशतवाड़' का सृजन करके भारतीय संस्कृति को परिपुष्ट करने का जो यत्न किया वह प्रत्येक दृष्टि से प्रशंसनीय एवं सराहनीय है।

डुगर के कल्हण शर्मा जी,

जिस प्रकार कश्मीर का इतिहास लिखकर कल्हण, राजस्थान का इतिहास लिखकर करनल टाड अमर हैं, उसी प्रकार आपकी कृति 'हिस्टरी एण्ड कल्चर ऑफ़ किशतवाड़' भी एक अमर कृति मानी जाएगी। आपने एक नई दृष्टि से एवम् एक नवीन दृष्टिकोण से किशतवाड़ का जो नया इतिहास रचा है, इससे न केवल किशतवाड़ आचल के लोग अपितु पूरा हिमालय क्षेत्र लाभान्वित हुआ है। निःसन्देह आप से पूर्व शिवजी धर ने 'तारीख-ए-किशतवाड़' फारसी में, इशरत गुलाम मुस्तफा ने 'तारीख-ए-किशतवाड़' उर्दू में, हरिलाल ज्योतषी जी ने 'श्रीस्थल देवी दर्शनम्' संस्कृत में, तथा कई अन्य विद्वानों ने उर्दू और अंग्रेजी में किशतवाड़ के अतीत पर प्रकाश तो डाला है, किन्तु जिस वैज्ञानिक दृष्टि से किशतवाड़ क्षेत्र का मंथन आपने किया, ऐसा प्रयास जम्मू-कश्मीर में ही नहीं अपितु पूरे हिमालय क्षेत्र में 'राहुल सांस्कृतयन' को छोड़ अन्य कोई नहीं कर सका है। अतः हमारी दृष्टि से आप न केवल किशतवाड़ के अपितु पूरे हिमालय क्षेत्र के सर्वोच्च इतिहासवेत्ता तथा इस क्षेत्र की संस्कृति के विशेषज्ञ हैं।



आपका यह ग्रंथ न केवल समसामयिक शोधकर्ताओं एवं बुद्धिजीवियों का मार्गदर्शन करेगा अपितु उन्हें अपनी पहचान बनाए रखने के लिए भी प्रेरणास्रोत सिद्ध होगा।

आदर्श गुरु शर्मा जी,

आपका व्यक्तित्व आपके विद्यार्थियों के लिए भी प्रेरणादायी रहा है। एक योग्य अध्यापक तथा कुशल प्रशासक के रूप में न केवल विद्यार्थियों में आप लोकप्रिय रहे अपितु आपकी प्रशासनिक कुशलता से आपके अधीनस्थ अधिकारी भी आपसे प्रभावित रहे। आपने किश्तवाड़ के क्षेत्र में जो प्रकाश की ज्योति प्रज्वलित की उससे जम्मू-कश्मीर का यह पिछड़ा जनपद प्रगति के कई सोपान चढ़ चुका है। आपके शिक्षार्थियों में आज कई योग्य चिकित्सक, इंजीनियर, शिक्षाविद, कुशल व्यवसायी, समाज सेवी और देश के रक्षक हैं। नई शिक्षा प्रणाली को व्यवहारिक रूप देने में भी आपने इस अंचल में अथक प्रयास किया है।

महान् समाज सेवी शर्मा जी,

समाज सेवा को आपने सदैव अपने जीवन का मूल मंत्र माना है। आप कई सामाजिक, साहित्यिक एवम् ऐतिहासिक संगठनों से जुड़े हैं। आदर्श बाल निकेतन आपके आदर्शों, निःस्वार्थ सेवाभाव तथा आपकी कल्पनाओं का साकार रूप है। आप भारतीय संस्कृति के अनन्य पुजारी, सत्यनिष्ठ सेवक, कर्मठ शिक्षक हैं। आप समाज के उत्थान के प्रति चिन्तनशील हैं। एक दार्शनीक के रूप में अध्यात्मवाद के क्षेत्र में आपकी अलग सोच है। आप पूरे मानवतावदी ही नहीं अपितु मानवता की प्रतिमूर्ति हैं।

मैं उपरोक्त सभी संस्थाओं के मान्य सदस्यों तथा अपनी ओर से भी आज के शुभ अवसर पर आपका पुनः अभिनन्दन करता हूँ और आपकी दीर्घायु के लिए ईश्वर से प्रार्थना करता हूँ।  
शुभम शुभम।

आपका शुभचिन्तक  
शिव 'निर्मोही'

पैथल (उधमपुर, जम्मू-कश्मीर)

# Map of Erstwhile Kishtwar State

## LEGEND

BOUNDARY LINE	=
HEAD QUARTER	□
VILLAGES	•
MOUNTAIN CLIFFS	△
RIVER	~
NALA	~
PASSES	⌋
ROUTES	- - -

